

A short reply to Lord Bridges

Lord Bridges, the Minister in the Lords who recently resigned from the Brexit Department, advises us we should offer continuing contributions to the EU for a transitional period. He tells us Brexit is very complicated.

There is nothing complicated about what we are doing. We had a long debate. The public decided to leave. We notified the EU of our intention to leave in accordance with the Treaty, and we will leave on March 29 2019 automatically under the rules of the Treaty. All that is easy. One of the main things we need to do is to spend our current EU contributions on our priorities from March 2019.

We are willing to discuss our future relationship with the EU and await their pleasure in doing so. If they do not want to agree a special relationship then we will have a relationship with them based on international law and World Trade rules. We wish to be friendly and positive about our future relationship and have no plans to cancel features of our current trade and collaboration. We are not proposing to take any action to damage their trade or transport links with us. After all the arguments and rhetoric we have no idea if they do want to damage their trade with us, which they can only do within WTO rules. The EU itself has to abide by the strong and complex framework of international law designed to stop states harming each other.