

[BCC comments on McDonnell, Starmer speeches at Labour Party Conference](#)

Commenting on Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell's speech at the Labour Party Conference, Dr Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

"Business communities around Britain will welcome Labour's recent efforts to deepen engagement on the big issues around economic growth, trade and Brexit.

"However, with the UK's departure from the EU on the horizon, businesses will be concerned by the Shadow Chancellor's proposals for widespread and deep intervention across the economy. Proposals to nationalise key industries would put business investment in the deep freeze at precisely the time that it is needed most.

"While we can agree that we want a productive and innovative economy, and better infrastructure, the role of government is to get the fundamentals of the business environment right – not to direct every aspect of economic life in the UK.

"The domestic business environment matters hugely, particularly with the economic change of Brexit still ahead of us. As we've said repeatedly across Westminster, the best Brexit deal in the world won't be worth the paper it's written on if we don't have the right policies in place here at home. Our message to the Shadow Chancellor is that a high-cost, high-tax, high-regulation UK is not a recipe for future economic success."

Commenting on the speech by Sir Keir Starmer, Shadow Brexit Secretary, Marshall added:

"Just as businesses want clarity from the government on their approach to Brexit, they want the same from the opposition. While Keir Starmer's call for a pragmatic negotiation, without arbitrary red lines, is welcome, most firms do not believe that either Labour or the Conservatives have a clear and agreed Brexit policy.

"Firms across the UK are looking for answers to their many practical questions about Brexit – but tell us that both Labour and the Conservatives are talking a lot, but saying very little.

"The priority message from business is that both major parties must strain every sinew to get a comprehensive transition deal agreed, and trade talks firmly underway, by the end of this year."

Ends

Notes to editors:

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) sits at the heart of a powerful network of 52 Accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, representing thousands of businesses of all sizes and within all sectors. Our Global Business Network connects exporters with nearly 40 markets around the world. For more information, visit: www.britishchambers.org.uk

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