

Brexit day

At last we leave the EU. It is now quite possible to leave fully at the end of December this year and reap the benefits of Brexit. We can be better off out, and we will restore self government.

It's nineteen months late , and we still stay under their rules and budgets for the rest of this year, so it's not what I wanted or voted for. In the end I accepted the verdict of the election and the new Parliament, as there was no support for just leaving without signing the Withdrawal Agreement which I thought the better option. The delay has been financially penal, forcing the UK to contribute around £1bn a month for many more months. It has been corrosive of our politics, setting the last Parliament against the people. It undermined trust in many MPs and the Parliament as a whole prior to the election, as so many MPs broke their promises to respect the referendum and help get us out .

Mr Cameron promised he would send the Withdrawal letter promptly after the vote, but failed to do so. Mrs May let Parliament and courts delay our exit letter further. She then promised us an exit in March 2019, with a good deal or with no deal. She too broke her word and kept us in, under pressure from a hostile and broken Parliament.

The new Parliament has a clear majority to leave, and a clear majority that Leave means an exit from the single market and Customs Union as well as from the EU Treaty which we leave this week. That is all very positive. It is important now that the UK government is firm and strong, as well as polite and positive in its dealings with the EU. There must be no sacrifice of our fish, no offers of more money, no acceptance of continuing ECJ jurisdiction. They need a Free Trade Agreement more than we do, and are more likely to grant one if we are firm. The UK has given far too much ground in past negotiations under Mrs May. The new team should table a Free Trade Agreement and explain we do not have to pay to trade.

The world teems with opportunities for us once we are fully out. Today is an important step along that road.