

# First Minister sets out a way forward for devolution post-Brexit

Speaking at a Wales Governance Centre event in Cardiff, the First Minister will say that while leaving the EU has the potential to destabilise the United Kingdom, it also offers the opportunity for the country's reinvention.

The paper presents a blueprint for a major constitutional renewal of the UK, which can meet the challenges Brexit poses for the devolved nations and the future governance of the country as a whole.

The First Minister will say:

“Leaving the European Union is the biggest challenge facing the United Kingdom, a challenge thrown into even sharper relief by the outcome of the General Election.

“Decisions taken now will affect Wales for decades to come. Our ability to trade, travel, attract investment, determine policies, legislate, support our countryside, invest in our regions – all of these will be influenced by how we leave the EU.

“I have been completely consistent in arguing that securing full and unfettered access to the Single Market should be our top priority. But, the fall-out from Brexit also has the potential to destabilise the United Kingdom as we know it – or, if we work together, we can use this as an opportunity to reinvent and strengthen our Union.”

The paper proposes replacing the current Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) with a new UK Council of Ministers that would take forward negotiations, reach binding decisions and help resolve disputes.

The council, served by an independent secretariat and a structured work programme, would bring the 4 governments together to negotiate and agree binding UK frameworks in devolved areas where they are needed, as well as considering non-devolved policies, such as state aid.

The paper also proposes a convention on the future of the United Kingdom. The convention, chaired by a respected, independent figure, would consider major questions which will face the UK once it is outside the EU and take evidence from all political parties, civil society and all parts of the UK.

The First Minister added:

“The opportunities presented by EU exit must be about the future, not the past – and that is what our paper is about. It represents

an important step forward in the work which we must undertake together with England, Scotland and Northern Ireland – through discussion, not diktat – to map our collective future.”

[Brexit: Securing Wales' future](#)