

Foreign Secretary: Bill will fix practical problems the Protocol has created in Northern Ireland

- Bill to fix the Northern Ireland Protocol and protect Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement returns to Parliament for second reading
- The legislation will fix the practical problems that parts of the Protocol have caused in Northern Ireland
- Government to launch intensive engagement process with businesses on Bill

Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss, will tell Parliament today (Monday 27 June) that new legislation will fix the problems that parts of the Northern Ireland Protocol have created and help uphold the [Belfast \(Good Friday\) Agreement](#).

At the second reading today, Parliament is set to debate the Government's Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, which introduces solutions in four key areas: burdensome customs processes, inflexible regulation, tax and spend discrepancies, and democratic governance issues. This will change parts of the Protocol, while leaving the rest intact.

Truss will tell MPs that the Bill is a basis for a durable and sustainable solution that protects the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, avoids a hard border, safeguards the EU Single Market and ensures the integrity of the UK. It also allows the UK to implement a negotiated solution in the event that one can be reached with the EU.

Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss, said:

Our overriding priority is protecting the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the bedrock of peace and stability in Northern Ireland – as it stands the Protocol is undermining this delicate balance.

This legislation will fix the problems the Protocol has created, ensuring that goods can flow freely within the UK, while avoiding a hard border and safeguarding the EU Single Market. A negotiated solution has been and remains our preference, but the EU continues to rule out changing the Protocol itself – even though it is patently causing serious problems in Northern Ireland – which therefore means we are obliged to act.

Following 18 months of discussions with the EU, the UK's preference remains for a negotiated solution to fix the problems which are baked into the Protocol. But the EU must be willing to change the Protocol itself. Ministers believe that the serious situation in Northern Ireland means they cannot afford to delay.

Alongside the second reading, the Government is launching a series of structured engagements with the business community, to discuss and gather views on the detailed implementation of the Bill. The Foreign Office is hosting the first roundtable event today with businesses and business groups from across Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. This builds on years of intensive engagement to date, where ministers have heard first-hand from business the problems the Protocol is causing on the ground.

Today's event brings together more than a dozen major UK businesses and representative groups including the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce, Asda, John Lewis and the Dairy Council NI. Truss will address the gathering held at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in London, where businesses will have an opportunity to discuss the solutions to ensure the best possible outcome.

The legislation will implement durable solutions in each of the four key areas:

- Green and red channels to remove unnecessary costs and paperwork for businesses trading within the UK, while ensuring full checks are done for goods entering the EU
- Businesses to have the choice of placing goods on the market in Northern Ireland according to either UK or EU goods rules, to ensure that Northern Ireland consumers are not prevented from buying UK standard goods, including as UK and EU regulations diverge over time.
- Ensure NI can benefit from the same tax breaks and spending policies as the rest of the UK, including VAT cuts on energy-saving materials and Covid recovery loans.
- Normalise governance arrangements so that disputes are resolved by independent arbitration and not by the European Court of Justice