

Is that it? The Political declaration with the EU

As expected, the latest draft of the Political document about our possible future partnership with the EU is empty of any enforceable content of benefit to the UK. It is an invitation to trade and customs talks extending over an unspecified period, delaying our exit from the EU. Far from taking back control of our money, our laws, and our borders, this Agreement if signed alongside the Withdrawal Agreement which is legally binding means we stay in and have no unilateral right to leave if the talks prove fruitless.

Under this non binding proposal our fish are still in play for a future negotiation. The Irish backstop remains etched legally into the Withdrawal Agreement, with words about a future technological solution as a possibility. There is plenty about the need for future regulatory convergence and for the UK to keep adopting EU laws we have no say over. The proposed format of the Future Partnership would be an EU Association Agreement. These Agreements are designed to bring potential member states of the EU progressively into line and under legal obligation to the body they wish to join.

This disappointing document confirms that this negotiation does not deliver Brexit, and does not give us control of our laws, money and borders, any time soon, with the risk that it might never properly do so.