

Jeremy Corbyn to meet Michel Barnier, European Union chief negotiator on Brexit

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, will have an extended meeting with the EU's chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, in Brussels on Thursday, in a move which signals Labour's growing importance to the Brexit process in the wake of the UK General Election.

The Labour leader will be joined by Shadow Brexit Secretary, Kier Starmer and Shadow Home Secretary, Diane Abbott, for the meeting in which they are expected to discuss Labour's priorities for a jobs-first Brexit deal and cover Labour's approach to Phase 1 negotiations.

Phase 1 includes citizen's rights, exit obligations, and Ireland's border arrangements. Labour will raise the issue of EU nationals and repeat the party's support for a unilateral guarantee of the rights of EU nationals currently living in Britain. Labour will extend the hand of partnership and friendship to European Union leaders and outline how a Labour-negotiated Brexit would seek to build on our integrated trading positions and commitment to protect and maximise trade opportunities between the UK and the rest of Europe.

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour party, said:

"Labour is a government in waiting and we are ready to take up the responsibility for Brexit negotiations.

"Labour respects the referendum result and the decision to leave the European Union. But a Labour Brexit would look very different to the race-to-the-bottom tax haven backed by this Conservative Government.

"In contrast to the Conservatives' megaphone diplomacy, we will conduct relations with our European neighbours respectfully and in the spirit of friendship. Our strong links with our European sister parties gives Labour an advantage in reaching an outcome that works for both sides.

"Labour would negotiate a jobs-first Brexit deal which puts the economy, jobs and living standards front and centre. Labour would unilaterally guarantee the rights of EU citizens living in the UK because it's the right thing to do.

"Labour wants to work with other countries to build a different Europe, one which promotes human rights and environmental protections, celebrates the positive and complementary contributions of European nations, and where trade is fair and sustainable."