

## PM call with Prime Minister Charles Michel of Belgium: 12 August 2019

The Prime Minister spoke to Prime Minister Charles Michel of Belgium this afternoon.

Prime Minister Johnson began by reiterating his commitment to strengthening the excellent bilateral relationship between the UK and Belgium, including in key areas such as security, trade and counterterrorism. He said that he looked forward to welcoming Prime Minister Michel for the NATO Leaders' Meeting on 4 December.

On Brexit, Prime Minister Johnson set out that the existing deal has been rejected three times by Parliament and must change. He reiterated that the UK stands ready to negotiate an alternative to the backstop in good faith, but if the EU continue to insist on no changes to the Withdrawal Agreement then we will have to leave without a deal on the 31 October.

On citizens' rights, Prime Minister Johnson thanked Prime Minister Michel for the positive approach of Belgium, which has legislation in place to protect the rights of UK nationals. He reiterated the UK's commitment that the rights of the 3.2 million citizens, including Belgian citizens now living and working in the UK, are protected whatever the circumstances.

The leaders finished the call by discussing how the UK and Belgium will continue to have a close relationship and work together on the important issues that face our continent.