

Press point by Michel Barnier in advance of his meeting with Dominic Raab, UK Secretary of State for Exiting the EU

I am very happy to welcome the Secretary of State to the Commission – Dominic, it is a pleasure to meet you!

We have a lot of work to do, with our teams.

There are thirteen weeks left before the October European Council.

During this time, we have two things to do:

- We must finalise the Withdrawal Agreement. We are not yet there.
- We must prepare a political declaration on our future relationship.

On the Withdrawal Agreement, it is a matter of urgency to agree on a legally operative backstop for Ireland and Northern Ireland: we need an all-weather insurance policy.

On the future relationship, the EU proposed in March an unprecedented partnership.

- Not only on trade, where we want an ambitious Free Trade Agreement that respects the integrity of the single market;
- But also on internal and external security, where a close partnership between us is more important than ever, given the geo-political context.

Our challenge will be to find common ground between the fundamental principles that define the EU and the UK positions.

That's all for now.

More is to come. Stay tuned.

I will see you again tomorrow after the General Affairs Council.