

Press release: PM meeting with Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar: 25 Sept 2017

The Prime Minister welcomed Taoiseach Leo Varadkar to Downing Street today to discuss the importance of devolved Government being restored to Northern Ireland as soon as possible and the UK Government's steadfast commitment to the Belfast Agreement and its successors.

Both leaders recognised the progress made by the parties in Northern Ireland and the Prime Minister welcomed the efforts and support of the Irish Government on achieving a successful outcome. There was also a shared acknowledgement of the outstanding issues that remained for the parties and the need for their continued work towards an agreement to ensure Northern Ireland has the political stability it needs.

The Prime Minister made clear how the UK will be the strongest friend and partner to the EU after we leave the EU and how maintaining the reciprocal arrangements for the Common Travel Area and the citizenship rights guaranteed by the Belfast Agreement were at heart of our approach.

On the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland, the Prime Minister reaffirmed that we will not accept any physical infrastructure at the border and how we are working on delivering a practical solution that allows for the most seamless possible movement of goods between the UK and EU.

The Prime Minister thanked the Taoiseach for his welcome of her Florence speech and they discussed the period of implementation which would enable people and businesses – both in the UK and in the EU – to adjust to the new arrangements in a smooth and orderly way.

They also spoke about the ongoing trade dispute between Boeing and Bombardier and their shared concern about the impact this could have on jobs and livelihoods in Northern Ireland and the Prime Minister recognised the Irish Government's support on resolving this important issue.

The Prime Minister said how she looked forward to continuing the special ties and close cooperation between the two countries and she also gave her strong support for Ireland's 2023 Rugby World Cup bid and the benefits this would bring to the sport and to Ireland and Northern Ireland.