

Sovereignty

The legal advisers to the ERG have stated that the EU/UK Agreement clearly sets out the sovereignty of the UK. There is no recourse to the ECJ, and the UK can pull out of the Agreement unilaterally if it wishes. I set out the relevant text on this site recently illustrating these matters which they confirm.

They also accept that there are unresolved questions in Northern Ireland under the Withdrawal Agreement. This new Agreement is silent on them. There is a five and a half year wait until the UK can take all or most of the fish catch in UK waters.

This form of Agreement around a free trade proposal will still require UK Ministers and Parliament to use or assert sovereign rights to change laws and administer trade and industry matters in our national interest. It is one thing to be legally sovereign, it is another to use the powers to diverge from EU laws and practises where that makes sense for the UK. We are not truly independent unless we feel free to vary matters as we wish.

I have spent the last few days pressing the government to clarify its approach to the legal acceptance of independence. In particular I have asked for three main things

1. Early legislation in areas identified on this site to improve the UK tax and business regime in UK interests
2. A strong fishing policy based around better standards of marine environmental protection immediately, and plans to recruit and provide a much bigger UK fleet of trawlers and associated harbours and food processing to take advantage of the modest extra quota available now and taking proper control of our fish in 2026
3. Greater clarification and resolution of Irish border and tax issues