

# Brexit bill: Green MEPs blast MPs for failing to stand up for Parliamentary democracy



# Green Party

9 February 2017

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UK Green MEPs, Molly Scott Cato, Jean Lambert, and Keith Taylor have issued a stinging condemnation of British MPs after Theresa May’s Brexit bill denying Parliament any real say in the process [sailed through the Commons](#).

The Prime Minister rejected calls for MPs to have a meaningful role in shaping the proposed divorce deal. The government, instead, confirmed that the parliamentarians elected to represent the British and Northern Irish people will only be offered a ‘take it or leave it’ vote on the final deal.

UK Green MEPs, who will get an opportunity to play a part in the EU’s negotiating process and cast a significant vote on the final terms of the deal, hit out at the Government for undermining the sovereignty of the UK Parliament.

Molly Scott Cato MEP, the Green Party’s Brexit spokesperson and MEP for the South West, said:

“I am delighted that 122 MPs voted against the Brexit bill. With Labour, Lib Dem, SNP, and Plaid Cymru MPs joining Green MP Caroline Lucas to reject the Bill unamended, we have seen a progressive alliance against the government’s plans for an extreme Brexit.

However, while the government is moving us towards the hard Brexit cliff edge, it is Labour that seems willing to push us off. The Party has shown

itself hopelessly divided and the failure to oppose the government on this the most critical of issues has played straight into the hands of the Tory Right.

Greens have been clear throughout: we cannot support triggering a process that will see the UK leave the single market and customs union and threatens to turn us into Europe's biggest tax haven. We need clear guarantees on worker and consumer rights and assurances there will be no weakening of environmental protections."

Jean Lambert, the Green MEP for London, said:

"It's outrageous that MPs appear grateful to be offered a vote on the final deal, rather than demanding this as a Parliamentary right. How bizarre that, as an MEP, I am guaranteed a right to vote on this but my MP has to plead for the privilege. And if my elected representative in UK Parliament has to plead, what say will the public get? The sidelining of Parliament and the British people is unacceptable.

The UK Parliament has chosen to set out little clear guidance for the Government on content or process: on what basis will MPs judge the final deal?"

Keith Taylor, the Green MEP for the South East and a plaintiff in so-called '[Dublin Case](#)', said:

"Theresa May has justified her riding roughshod over Parliamentary democracy by claiming the British people have united to back Brexit. They haven't. Far from it. The mandate for an extreme Brexit is non-existent. According to the [latest polls](#), just 39% of the British public support the Prime Minister's vision of an extreme Brexit. Meanwhile, 48% of people want Britain to either remain a member of the EU or, at least, maintain a close relationship with our European neighbours.

Yet the Government has confirmed that it will only offer MPs a Hobson's choice: the UK either leaves the single market and negotiates a new deal with the EU or ends up with no deal at all, in which case the Government promises to make the country a tax haven outside Europe.

I know we can do better than this. Which is why I am fighting in the courts for the British people to be given the choice they are being denied. The EU referendum should have been the start of a democratic process, not the end of one. As Greens, we believe the British people should have the final say on the Brexit deal, once it is clear what the outcome of the negotiations are."

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## Statement to Parliament: Commercial spaceflight

We intend to publish a draft spaceflight bill later this month, dedicated to commercial spaceflight in the UK. This legislation will be fundamental to enabling small-satellite launches and sub-orbital flights from the UK, ensuring the UK is well placed to take advantage of a growing global market. The government's intention is to introduce this Bill formally early in the next session, following a period of scrutiny and engagement with industry and other interest groups.

The space sector is vital to the future of the UK economy, with a strong record of creating high-value jobs and generating wealth across the country. To help the creation of the space launch market in the UK, the [UK Space Agency](#) is inviting commercial space consortia to apply for grant funding to take the action that will make our ambitions a reality.

Together, the proposed legislation and grant funding announced today will have the potential to enable [commercial spaceflight](#) from a UK spaceport by 2020.

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## Overseas NGOs welcomed to China: MPS

China said overseas NGOs are welcome to carry out friendly exchanges and cooperation in China.

Efficient and convenient services will be provided for overseas NGOs and their legitimate rights and interests will be protected, according to a statement from the overseas NGO management office under the Ministry of Public Security (MPS).

So far, authorities in Beijing, Shanghai and south China's Guangdong Province have issued registration certificates to 32 representative offices of NGOs from outside the Chinese mainland, according to the MPS.

Registration services for overseas NGO representative offices became mandatory from Jan. 1, as a new law on overseas NGOs took effect the same day.

To support the process the MPS, which is responsible for registration, has released a registration guideline, set up registration counters at provincial-level police authorities and launched a supporting website.

Registration records of some overseas NGOs, which were previously kept at the civil affairs and industrial and commercial authorities, have also been transferred to the new authority in charge.

The MPS and other authorities have held a number of meetings with representatives from overseas NGOs as well as delegates from the European Union to China and foreign embassies and consulates, to listen to their suggestions on the new process.

In Shanghai and Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province, police have given foreign diplomats and representatives of overseas NGOs demonstrations of the new procedures.

Adopted by the top legislature in April, 2016, the new law requests all NGOs outside the Chinese mainland to secure approval to operate on the mainland.

The MPS said it will continue to improve the new service.

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## **Former FAW chairman sentenced for taking bribes**

Xu Jianyi, former chairman of one of China's largest auto producers FAW Group Corp., was sentenced Thursday to 11-and-a-half years in prison for accepting bribes.

Beijing No.1 Intermediate People's Court ordered that all of Xu's personal property listed in its verdict statement should be confiscated, and his illicit gains should be turned over to the national treasury.

The court found that from 2000 to 2013, Xu took advantage of his various posts to help others with business contracts, promotions, and directly or indirectly accepted assets worth 12.19 million yuan (around 1.77 million U.S. dollars).

Xu had served as vice general manager, general manager and chairman of FAW Group Corp.; a member of the standing committee of Communist Party of China (CPC) Jilin provincial committee; and Party chief of Jilin city from 2000 to 2013.

The court showed leniency, taking into consideration his confession, remorse and the fact that he voluntarily turned over all his ill-gotten gains.

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## Getting things done – Glamis Road

I am pictured below towards the top of the south section of Glamis Road :



At the request of residents, I asked the City Council for a safety traffic island at this location to complement the one north of the roundabout I previously successfully campaigned for and I am pleased to say this second island has been agreed to and will be installed in the spring.

Residents have also requested a similar island at the south end of Glamis Road and I have been advised by the City Development Department this will be considered along with other similar requests during 2017/18.