

The response of the EU to the letter

It is curious that some in the EU seem to think there needs to be a long negotiation over the UK's exit. The UK has announced its intention to leave, and can do so after two years or before by mutual agreement. It is difficult to see why these democratic friendly nations would want to keep us in the EU for a whole two years if we just want to leave and if they do not want to talk about the future relationship. Of course the UK will pay its regular bills up to the point of departure. There is no legal requirement to pay anything else.

The UK is making a very friendly and generous offer – full tariff free access to our market, full rights for all EU citizens currently here, continuing defence and security collaboration and much else. All we ask is the same courtesies in return. I always defend the other member states and EU from allegations that they want to damage themselves and us during this process. I now look forward to them living up to the fine ideals of democracy, co-operation and free trade which they say are part of the EU scheme. I would expect them to see that free access to our market is an important advantage for their farmers and others who would face higher tariffs under WTO rules.