

Transition to what?

I have told Ministers this week that I do not want a two year Transition period agreed anytime soon before we know what if anything we are going to transit to. If there is no Agreement on a comprehensive Free Trade deal and wider partnership then we should just leave in March 2019 and get the full benefits immediately of paying them no more money and being able to change our laws and control our own borders as we see fit. That is what Leave voters voted for.

The Prime Minister has always said she would consider an Implementation period after March 2019, but that implies there is an Agreement to implement. She also said it should be as short as possible, and of variable duration depending on the clauses of the Agreement to be implemented and their complexities. None of this is needed if there is no acceptable deal. Her argument for considering an Implementation period was to avoid a double adjustment – first to being out, then to the terms of a new Agreement. That makes sense. By definition you cannot know what if anything you need for implementation before you have even started negotiating the trade agreement.

Neither Remain nor Leave voters will be happy if we replicate the obligations and costs of EU membership without any longer being a voting member of the Council. Leave must mean leave. That means taking back control of our money, our borders and our laws, and leaving on 29 March 2019 as agreed.