

Update on Northern Ireland

It looks as if some at the heart of government thought a trade agreement over red and green lanes would be sufficient to fix Northern Ireland and EU issues. It seems that the meeting with Unionists pointed out to the Prime Minister that the application of EU law in Northern Ireland was the bigger matter where the EU had not made the changes required. Under the Protocol itself parties are meant to give priority to the Good Friday Agreement which needs the consent of both communities to any changes. The Unionist community does not agree to the EU approach to the Protocol and to lawmaking for NI. As a result the Prime Minister doubled down on his words that there was still no Agreement to publish. He required his negotiators to return to the EU to sort out the issue of law making and enforcement in NI.

The Protocol was meant to be a temporary or holding arrangement. The EU needs to reconsider its position on these matters to assist in restoring Stormont and the tradition of working through the agreement of both communities.