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# JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE PARTIES ON EU EXIT

3 minutes

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21 May, 2018 - by [Michelle O'Neill](#)

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“On 23rd June 2016 citizens voted to remain within the European Union.

Despite this, the British Government intend to exit the EU in March 2019.

Sinn Féin, Green Party, Alliance and the Social Democratic and Labour Party all share the common position that we should stay within both the single market and customs union and that there should be no hard border on the island of Ireland or between the two islands.

This is critical to protecting investment, jobs, trade and the hard-won peace.

The Joint Report of the EU and British negotiators published on 8 December last year reiterated its commitment to protecting the Good Friday Agreement, including the effective operation of the institutions and bodies of the Agreement.

The Joint Report also affirmed that North South cooperation is a central part of the Good Friday Agreement and Prime Minister Theresa May committed to protecting and supporting continued

North South and East West cooperation across the full range of frameworks of cooperation, including the operation of the North South bodies.

This week sees us entering into another crucial stage in the Brexit negotiations.

All of the outstanding issues relating to the Withdrawal Agreement will be considered in relation to Northern Ireland/Ireland and the future relationship.

In relation to the Protocol on “Ireland and Northern Ireland”, Theresa May has agreed that a backstop solution for the border will form part of the legal text of the Withdrawal Agreement, and that this backstop would apply, unless and until, another solution is found.

Time is of the essence as we approach the European Council meeting next month (June).

The political parties in the Northern Ireland Assembly wish to reaffirm our common position that we cannot withstand exclusion from the single market or customs union;

That the protection of the Good Friday Agreement in all of its parts, including North/South and East/West co-operation is critical to maintaining relationships within, and between these islands;

That the backstop agreed by both the British Government and the EU27 is the bottom line in order to safeguard our political and economic stability now and for the future.”

**Agreed and co-signed by;**

Michelle O'Neill MLA, Assembly Leader and Vice-President of Sinn Féin

Colum Eastwood MLA, Leader of the Social Democratic and  
Labour party

Naomi Long MLA, Leader of the Alliance party for Northern Ireland

Steven Agnew MLA, Leader of the Green Party NI