



Statement by Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič following today's announcement by the UK government regarding the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland

Brussels, 21 July 2021

The Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland is the joint solution that the EU found with Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Lord David Frost – and was ratified by the UK Parliament – to address the unique challenges that Brexit, and the type of Brexit chosen by the British government, poses for the island of Ireland. Its aim is to protect the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement in all its parts, maintain peace and stability in Northern Ireland, avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland, while preserving the integrity of the EU Single Market. In order for these objectives to be achieved, the Protocol must be implemented. Respecting international legal obligations is of paramount importance.

The EU has sought flexible, practical solutions to overcome the difficulties citizens in Northern Ireland are experiencing regarding the implementation of the Protocol. For example, on 30 June, the Commission tabled a package of measures to address certain pressing issues, including changing our own rules to ensure the long-term supply of medicines from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. These solutions were brought about with the core purpose of benefitting the people in Northern Ireland.

We take note of the statement made by Lord Frost today.

We will continue to engage with the UK, also on the suggestions made today. We are ready to continue to seek creative solutions, within the framework of the Protocol, in the interest of all communities in Northern Ireland. However, we will not agree to a renegotiation of the Protocol.

Joint action in the joint bodies established by the Withdrawal Agreement will be of paramount importance over the coming months. We must prioritise stability and predictability in Northern Ireland.

I look forward to speaking to Lord Frost soon.

STATEMENT/21/3821

Press contacts:

[Tim McPHIE](#) (+ 32 2 295 86 02)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)