# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations)**  |
| **DATE**  | **06 January 2021** |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles MS, Counsel General and Minister for European Transition** |

On Tuesday 29 December, Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) met for an extraordinary meeting following the deal reached between the UK Government and the EU on the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The meeting was held virtually and the communique can be found at:

 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-ministerial-committee-communique-29-december-2020>

The first item on the agenda covered the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. This gave me the opportunity to note that whilst I welcomed the fact that the UK had avoided a no deal outcome the deal agreed was a long way from the close economic relationship with the EU that the Welsh Government has advocated throughout the negotiations. As the agreement will bring significant changes to our trading arrangements with the EU and result in the economy being smaller than it otherwise would have been, I again called for the UK Government to put in place new support measures for the economy to help businesses through the transition. I also pressed the UK Government to commit to ensuring the Devolved Governments are properly represented in the structures agreed to implement the agreement including the proposed Partnership Council, Specialised Committees and Working Groups.

The second item on the agenda covered readiness and deal implementation. On readiness, I noted that with the deal agreed so close to the end of the transition period, there is very little time for businesses and organisations to understand the agreement and prepare accordingly. I also raised the issue of concurrent risks of EU transition disruption and the ongoing disruption as a result of the Covid pandemic, specifically on the movement of critical goods through key trade routes with the EU. I called again, for assurances that there would be equitable distribution of goods to ensure all countries of the UK receive supplies to meet respective needs.

On deal implementation, the item focussed on the Future Relationship Bill. I raised my concern and disappointment that the first time the Welsh Government saw the Treaty, was Christmas Day and the UK Government only shared the full draft text of the Future Relationship Bill late in the evening of the 28 December. As a consequence it is impossible for the Welsh Government to have a clear understanding of the ways in which the Bill will affect our competence In light of this, I informed the UK Government that the Senedd would therefore be recalled on 30 December but would be holding a general debate, rather than a debate on a motion for legislative consent.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep Members informed. Should Members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns, I would be happy to do so.