Dear Mr Neill,

PROVIDING A CROSS-BORDER CIVIL JUDICIAL COOPERATION FRAMEWORK – A FUTURE PARTNERSHIP PAPER

I am writing to inform you that the Government has today published a paper on its vision for cross-border civil judicial cooperation once the UK exits the EU, a copy of which you have already received.

It is in the mutual interests of the UK and the EU that there continues to be an effective framework for resolving cross-border legal disputes after we leave. Our proposals will provide confidence and certainty to families, business and individuals that they can effectively settle cross-border disputes in the future – whether these relate to international commercial contracts, consumer or employment problems, or arguments about child/parent contact or maintenance arrangements. All these groups will want clarity as well on how judgments in cross-border cases will be recognised and enforced.

The UK has a long history of cooperation in this area with the EU, and internationally, and we want that to continue. Any future agreement with the EU should therefore maximise certainty and minimise delay and expense for those involved in cross-border disputes. To that end, we want to agree a clear set of rules about which country’s courts will hear a case, which country’s law will apply to resolve it, and the way in which judgments given in one jurisdiction can be recognised and enforced in another. Our paper sets out the approach we will take to these issues in the negotiations.

The paper and further information can also be found online at www.gov.uk/government/publications

I aim to provide a response to your Committee’s report on the subject of civil judicial co-operation shortly, but in the meantime, I would be happy for my officials to provide you and your clerks with a briefing on the Government’s position if that would be helpful.

Later this week, we also expect to publish a paper which will look at the various possibilities for how disputes between the EU and the UK under the separation and future agreements would be resolved. The Secretary of State for Exiting the EU I would be very grateful to know your views on that once it’s published also.

Yours ever

RT HON DAVID LIDINGTON CBE MP