Lord Boswell of Aynho
Chairman, European Union Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

18 February 2019

Dear Lord Boswell,

INVITATION: MEETING ON PARLIAMENT’S ROLE IN THE NEGOTIATION FOR PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS

I was grateful for the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee last month. During the session we discussed how the Prime Minister has made clear that it is the Government’s intention to ensure a greater and more formal role for Parliament in the next stage of negotiations with the EU. I recall during the session you mentioned that the Committee might be open to facilitation of engagement in different formats, in addition to holding public evidence sessions.

On behalf of the Government, I am therefore writing to offer a private discussion with you or the Committee about the ways in which the Government could engage the House further in our approach to negotiating our future partnership with the EU. In particular, the Prime Minister also indicated that there will be new opportunities for further engagement with select committees across Parliament, and we envisage that engagement beginning immediately as we begin to develop our negotiating objectives for the next phase of negotiations. This is something I have wholeheartedly supported since becoming Secretary of State.

Given the fundamental significance of the issues at stake, it is of great importance to me that we establish a collaborative approach between Government and parliamentarians on these matters as far as is possible. This would allow us to harness the great expertise that is to be found within Parliament - especially within the committee system, which encourages the development both of great subject matter expertise and of an ability to work beyond party lines.

Therefore, as part of this discussion, I am very keen to hear your views at your earliest convenience on how the experience and expertise within your Committee can best be harnessed by the Government as we approach the next phase of negotiations, assuming that Parliament is able to provide its support for a withdrawal agreement and political declaration so that we can move into that phase.

If this would be of interest, my office will be in touch to arrange a suitable time. I am copying this letter to the Leader of the House of Lords.

RT HON STEVE BARCLAY MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION