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European Union citizens living in Scotland,

I know that the result of the recent referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union has created considerable uncertainty for EU citizens living in Scotland. As you know, Scotland voted emphatically to stay in the EU. We voted for an open and inclusive society with free movement and free trade.

As I stated on the morning after the vote Scotland is your home, you are welcome here, and the contribution that you make to our economy, our society and our culture is valued. I would also like to assure you that the Scottish Government is pursuing every possible option to protect Scotland's position in Europe and, by extension, the interests of the people from across the European Union who live here.

The immediate status of EU nationals living in Scotland has not changed and you retain all the same rights to live and to work here. I believe those rights for the longer term should be guaranteed immediately and have written to the Prime Minister and all of the candidates to succeed him, calling for all EU citizens living here to be given an assurance that their residency will be unaffected.

Scotland remains a stable and open place to live, study, work and do business and Scotland's ability to trade with the rest of the EU continues.

This is an unprecedented and uncertain situation and as we continue in our efforts to protect Scotland's relationship with Europe, and your place within Scotland we will work with your communities to provide you with further information.

NICOLA STURGEON