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The Rt Hon Liz Truss
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth
and Development Affairs

By email: Private.Office@fcdo.gov.uk

30 June 2022

Dear Liz

Yesterday the Scottish Parliament voted unanimously for the UK Government to withdraw its Northern Ireland Protocol Bill and concentrate its efforts instead on immediately re-starting negotiations with the European Union.

The motion rejected the UK Government's current course of action as being unacceptable, highlighting the risks of sparking a disastrous trade dispute and breaking international law. The full text of the motion is appended to this letter.

It is clear that the UK Government cannot both enter into negotiations with the EU while also threatening to breach the international treaty it signed with them less than three years ago.

In your letter of 13 June, you asked whether I would support a legislative consent motion in the Scottish Parliament for the UK Government's Northern Ireland Protocol Bill. In light of the outcome of yesterday's vote in the Scottish Parliament, and as the legislation currently stands, it is of course inconceivable that the Scottish Government would do so. I seek your assurance that the UK Government will respect the Sewel Convention and will not, as it has done with other Brexit legislation, press ahead without the Scottish Parliament's consent.

Once again, I am urging you to pull back from reckless unilateral action, return to the negotiating table with our European partners without delay, and avert disastrous consequences for Scotland and the whole of the UK.

Yours sincerely

ANGUS ROBERTSON

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Scottish Parliament motion on the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill

Motion passed, unopposed, on Wednesday 29 June 2022

“That the Parliament agrees that it is fundamentally unacceptable for the UK Government to unilaterally disapply key parts of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement, the signing of which the Prime Minister hailed as a “fantastic moment”; further agrees that by proposing this course of action the UK Government is risking a disastrous trade dispute with the European Union, with damaging consequences for Scotland in the midst of a cost of living crisis and at a time when the UK is in danger of falling into recession; condemns that the Bill breaks international law and risks the integrity of the Good Friday Agreement, and calls, therefore, on the UK Government to withdraw the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill and restart negotiations with the EU immediately.”

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