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Rt Hon Arlene Foster, MLA
First Minister

(by email)

3rd November 2016

I was glad to have the opportunity to meet you both at last week's plenary meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee in London.

I found it very helpful for the four administrations to meet to discuss emerging views about the way forward in relation to the UK's exit from the European Union. I believe it is essential that the devolved administrations contribute constructively to the Prime Minister's plans for developing objectives for negotiations and I therefore welcome the agreement to establish the new JMC(EN) sub-committee to take forward this multilateral engagement.

At the same time, I recognise the need for bilateral engagement with the UK Government and I have had 2 useful conversations with David Davis since taking up my post.

I also believe it is important that the devolved administrations explore opportunities to share information and develop an understanding of those areas in which we have common interests in order to maximise our influence in the forthcoming process. To this end, I have had a very informative meeting with Mark Drakeford, from the Welsh Government, and would welcome a similar discussion with your lead Ministers, perhaps following the first JMC(EN) meeting. If you agree, I will ask my officials to liaise directly with yours to set up a meeting.

I look forward to seeing you or your nominated lead Ministers on 9 November.

Michael Russell

