



# Union and business leaders issue joint appeal for urgent progress in Brexit negotiations

- **The TUC, CBI, ETUC and BusinessEurope met for the first time in London, ahead of June’s European Council meeting**
- **Leaders call for agreement on key issues, including regulatory alignment, frictionless trade and Northern Ireland**

*(Brussels, 27 June 2018)*

Ahead of this week’s European Council meeting, the Directors General of BusinessEurope and the CBI, **Markus J. Beyrer** and **Carolyn Fairbairn**, and the General Secretaries of the ETUC and the TUC, **Luca Visentini** and **Frances O’Grady** have issued an unprecedented joint statement urging faster progress. The organisations, which together represent 45 million workers and 20 million employers across Europe, met for the first time in London on 15 June to discuss Brexit.

## **The statement reads:**

“We are calling on the UK government and the EU to inject pace and urgency in the negotiations, bringing about measurable progress, in particular a backstop arrangement to avoid a hard border in Ireland.

“Decisions will be needed in June and October to finalise the withdrawal agreement and the transitional arrangement, and put economic interests and people’s jobs, rights and livelihoods first.

“The UK government and the EU will need to agree on all aspects of regulatory alignment, which is of the utmost importance, without jeopardising the integrity of the single market.

“This must involve preserving value chains and avoiding non-tariff barriers to trade; finding a solution for intra-corporate transfer (ICT) arrangements; barrier-free and frictionless trade in goods and services; and a mechanism for agreeing a mutually acceptable level playing field for workers’ rights.



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“Employers and unions have already developed a consensus on issues such as the need to prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland, and the rights of UK citizens in the EU and EU citizens in the UK. We are calling on the UK and EU to consult us in a meaningful and more structured manner on a joint basis so that we can contribute to identifying and designing practical solutions that will work.

“The cost of disagreement between the UK and the EU would be dire for firms, workers and the communities where they live. Amid uncertain times, we appeal to negotiators on both sides to put jobs and prosperity before politics when seeking solutions that will matter for generations to come.”

### ENDS

#### Notes to editors

**BusinessEurope** is the leading advocate for growth and competitiveness at European level, standing up for companies across the continent and campaigning on the issues that most influence their performance. A recognised social partner, we speak for all-sized enterprises in 34 European countries whose national business federations are our direct members.

Across the UK, the **CBI** speaks on behalf of 190,000 businesses of all sizes and sectors. The CBI’s corporate members together employ nearly 7 million people, about one third of private sector-employees. With offices in the UK as well as representation in Brussels, Washington, Beijing and Delhi, the CBI communicates the British business voice around the world.

The **Trades Union Congress (TUC)** exists to make the working world a better place for everyone. We bring together more than 5.5 million working people who make up our 50 member unions. We support unions to grow and thrive, and we stand up for everyone who works for a living.

The **European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)** speaks with a single voice on behalf of European workers to have a stronger say in EU decision-making. The ETUC represents 45 million members from 89 trade union organisations in 39 European countries, plus 10 European Trade Union Federations.

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