

Statement by the European Commission following the first meeting of the Partnership Council under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement

The European Union and the United Kingdom today held the first meeting of the Partnership Council in London.

The EU welcomed the entry into force of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (the 'Agreement'), highlighted the importance of this Agreement in building a mutually beneficial and stable relationship and committed to its full and timely implementation, including its governance structures. In that context, the co-chairs agreed on an indicative timetable for upcoming meetings of the various joint committees established under the Agreement.

In today's meeting, the parties discussed the implementation of the Agreement, notably in the areas of fisheries, in particular on licences for access to waters of the Channel Islands, non-discrimination between Member States on work visa fees, law enforcement and judicial cooperation, and the UK's participation in Union programmes.

The Partnership Council also acknowledged its duties vis-a-vis the Parliamentary Partnership Assembly and the Civil Society Forum.

The European Union recalled the importance of continuous dialogue and transparency in the implementation of the Agreement. It also noted that significant difficulties remained in the implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement, particularly the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, and that these would be addressed in the framework of the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee meeting, taking place in London today too. The full implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement is a prerequisite for a solid future relationship built on trust.

The co-chairs agreed to remain in regular contact.