

*Today (19 March), European Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič and the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Rt Hon Michael Gove, in their capacity as co-chairs of the EU-UK Joint Committee under the Withdrawal Agreement, had a constructive exchange by telephone to prepare the first meeting of the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee.*

*To maintain the planned schedule (30 March) and launch the work of the Joint Committee and the Specialised Committees, they formally agreed on a provisional agenda for the first meeting of the Joint Committee. Given the extraordinary COVID-19 developments, they also agreed to explore alternatives to meeting in person on 30 March, for instance by means of a video conference. As established by the Withdrawal Agreement, they confirmed the Joint Committee discussions will focus on the implementation of the Agreement, not on the future relationship between the UK and EU.*

*Vice-President Šefčovič and Minister Gove sent their best wishes for a speedy recovery to Michel Barnier and all those affected by the coronavirus pandemic.*