



Statement by Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič following his meeting with Lord Frost on the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland

Brussels, 19 November 2021

On 19 November, European Commission Vice-President Maroš **Šefčovič** hosted Lord David Frost in Brussels to discuss the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. This was their fifth meeting following the package of far-reaching solutions that the EU proposed on 13 October to facilitate the implementation and to strengthen stability and predictability for the people and businesses in Northern Ireland.

Vice-President Šefčovič reiterated the need to shift into a result-oriented mode and to deliver on the issues raised by Northern Irish stakeholders. It is essential that the recent change in tone now leads to joint tangible solutions in the framework of the Protocol.

This remains the case particularly for the uninterrupted long-term supply of medicines from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. There is a genuine urgency. We welcome the progress this week. We now need to press on and get this crucial issue across the line. This is a real test of political goodwill. The EU, for its part, is confident that our proposed solution, addressing all concerns raised by industry, would bring much needed clarity and foster a positive political momentum.

On customs, there has been initial useful engagement at technical level. These discussions, which aim to significantly reduce not to eliminate customs processes, should be pursued.

At the same time, we urge the UK government to make a clear move towards us in the area of sanitary and phytosanitary controls to reciprocate the big move made by the EU. The EU-proposed solution would lead to a very significant simplification of certification and a reduction in checks. Identity and physical checks would be reduced by around 80% compared to the checks currently required.

Lord Frost and I will meet again in London next week.

STATEMENT/21/6172

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