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Brexit: UK and EU agree delay to 31 October

Philippe Lamberts on the outcome of the Brexit summit

Philippe Lamberts, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament and member of the Brexit Steering Group on the outcome of the Brexit summit last night.

"The strategy to keep pressure on the British government with short deadlines had not worked out. To avoid a no deal which would be the worst option for both EU and UK, the Heads of State and government opted now for a longer extension to give more time for a solution. This was indeed necessary to avoid a disaster this Friday.

"We deplore the fact that, almost three years after the referendum, the United Kingdom has failed to act decisively on its result. The British government is prolonging uncertainty for the millions of EU citizens in the UK and British citizens in the EU-27. On top of that, the stalemate uselessly distracts the EU from meeting the environmental, social and democratic challenges it faces and has totally paralyzed political decision making in the UK.

"The choice of the EU Heads of State and governments not to pull the plug on British membership yet was driven by political realism. Obviously, the extension of the Art.50 for only a few months creates risks to the good functioning of the EU. But it also creates opportunities for all those in the UK, including the Greens and EFA member parties, to increase the political pressure towards a second referendum.

"A second referendum would allow the British people to choose between exiting the EU by adopting the Withdrawal Agreement and staying in the EU. We remain convinced that going back to the people is the most adequate and elegant way out of the current impasse.

"The fact that the UK is now very likely to participate in the European elections will provide an opportunity for pro-EU forces in the UK to stand up and mobilize. We will spare no effort to demonstrate to citizens across the 28 the positive value that the EU can have for all of us."

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Responsible MEPs



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