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Clare Adamson MSP,
Convener of the Constitution, Europe, External
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By email: CEEAC.Committee@parliament.scot

Dear Clare,

13th August 2024

Thank you for your letter of 16 July. I am writing to introduce myself following my appointment as Minister for the Constitution and EU Relations.

The Government intends to improve security co-operation and remove barriers to trade between the UK and the European Union (EU). However, we know our relationship with the EU also has implications for the constitution, and many aspects of the Withdrawal Agreement and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement fall within devolved competence. This is one of many reasons it is important that we reset relations between the four governments within the UK. My approach to UK-EU relations will always respect the role of devolved governments and legislatures.

As we set out in the King's Speech, we intend to work closely with the devolved governments to deliver for people across the whole of the UK. I note your letter of 16 July – the Sewel Convention and the way the UK Government legislates is certainly a priority area and we are intending to strengthen the Sewel Convention with a new memorandum of understanding. We will be able to send you a fuller response soon.

In the interim, I would be happy to have an informal, introductory meeting with the Committee in person in my capacity as Minister for EU Relations, and I will ask my officials to work with yours to find a suitable date.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds
Minister for the Cabinet Office
HM Paymaster General