

**THE RT. HON. THERESA MAY MP**



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

Monday 26 June 2017

Dear colleague,

The Chief Whip has today signed a confidence and supply agreement between the Conservative & Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party. I wanted to write to you at the earliest possible opportunity to set out the details.

This is a crucial time for the United Kingdom, with important work to be done at home and abroad. Having won the most votes and the largest number of seats in the House of Commons by a significant margin, only the Conservative Party has the ability and legitimacy to lead the Government our country needs. The alternative is Jeremy Corbyn in Downing Street – which would put our economy in peril and Brexit negotiations at risk, and weaken our national security.

This agreement means the DUP will support the Conservative Party on votes on the Queen's Speech, the Budget, and on legislation relating to Brexit and national security. It will ensure that we can govern in the national interest – strengthening and enhancing the Union, keeping our country safe, delivering prosperity for all, and securing a departure from the European Union which benefits all parts of the United Kingdom.

**Key measures in the agreement**

- The DUP agrees to support the Government on all motions of confidence; and on the Queen's speech, the Budget, finance bills, money bills, supply and appropriation legislation, and Estimates.
- The DUP also agrees to support the Government on legislation pertaining to the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, and legislation pertaining to national security. Support on other matters will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- A co-ordination committee will be convened, chaired by the Government.
- Our general election manifesto made clear that there would be no change in the pensions triple lock before 2020. Both parties have agreed that there will be no change to triple lock for the duration of this Parliament.

- Both parties have also agreed that there will be no change to the universal nature of the Winter Fuel Payment. I said that we would listen to what people said during election campaign and this is an example of our doing so.
- Both parties are committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and to its implementation throughout the United Kingdom. We agree to meet our NATO commitment of spending 2 per cent of GDP on our Armed Forces, and to work together to consider options to support the highly successful reserve forces in Northern Ireland.
- In recognition of the importance of the agricultural sector to Northern Ireland – just as in many other parts of the United Kingdom – we agree to continue to commit the same cash total in funds for farm support until the end of the Parliament, as the Conservative Party manifesto made clear. Further discussions will take place on the future framework for farming support.
- As we made clear in our manifesto, the Conservative Party will never be neutral in expressing its support for the Union. As the UK Government we believe that Northern Ireland’s future is best served within a stronger United Kingdom. We will always uphold the consent principle and the democratic wishes of the people of Northern Ireland.
- Both parties will adhere fully to their respective commitments set out in the Belfast Agreement and its successors. The Conservative Party reiterates its steadfast support for the Belfast Agreement and its successors – and, as the UK Government, will continue to govern in the interests of all parts of the community in Northern Ireland.
- The DUP recognises the need for early restoration of inclusive and stable devolved government in Northern Ireland and affirms its commitment to agreeing the formation of an Executive. HM Government will continue to work with the Northern Ireland parties and the Irish Government towards this objective, in full accordance with the three-stranded approach.
- Both parties agree on the need to recognise the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland’s history and the effect this has had on the economy and people from all parts of the community. Both parties agree the need for additional financial support for Northern Ireland and jointly desire that this will play a positive role in the efforts to re-establish devolved government for the benefit of all the people of Northern Ireland.
- The agreement will remain in place for the length of the Parliament, and can be reviewed by the mutual consent of both parties. After each Parliamentary session both parties will review the aims, principles and implementation of this agreement.

## **Financial support to Northern Ireland**

Northern Ireland's unique circumstances, not least the legacy of the Troubles, means that it faces specific challenges. For example, the employment rate in Northern Ireland is over 4 percentage points lower than in Wales, over 5 percentage points lower than in Scotland, and over 6 percentage points lower than in England. That is why HM Government has made available up to £2.5 billion of financial support and flexibility for the Northern Ireland Executive over the course of the past three years, by virtue of the Stormont House and Fresh Start Agreements in 2014 and 2015. Following discussions between our two parties, and in order to support our shared objectives of strengthening the economy, HM Government is prepared to make available additional financial support, details of which can be found here: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conservative-and-dup-agreement-and-uk-government-financial-support-for-northern-ireland>

As a proudly Unionist party, Conservatives want to see every part of our United Kingdom succeed and thrive. That is why, through separate schemes, Scotland and Wales also benefit from direct investment from the Exchequer. Since 2014, HM Government has committed £1.3 billion of investment in Scotland and Wales through City Deals, and the Government is committed to further City Deals in both nations.

As our manifesto made clear, we are also increasing investment in our public services in England. We have pledged additional NHS funding of a minimum of £8 billion in real terms over the next five years; and to increase funding in real terms per head in every year. Our spending on the NHS in England is also translated into extra spending in Scotland and Wales through the Barnett formula: how that is spent is a matter for the Scottish and Welsh governments.

As I set out in the House of Commons debate on the Queen's Speech last week, this Government will take the country forward with humility and resolve. This agreement gives an opportunity to do so in the national interest – let us now get to work.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. May', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**The Rt Hon Theresa May MP**