

## Philippe Lamberts: Value of EU shown through 'shared unity and respect' amid Brexit turmoil

Written by Martin Banks on 11 February 2019 in News  
News

Greens co-leader Philippe Lamberts has said that the "one silver lining" to the ongoing Brexit saga is that the value of the EU is being shown through its "shared unity and respect."



**Philippe Lamberts** | Photo Credit: *European Parliament Audiovisual*

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After meeting with Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar on Thursday to discuss Brexit, Lamberts told this website, "It's clear that across the EU, from Dublin to Brussels, we are united in defending the integrity of the Good Friday Agreement, the Single Market and our Union."

"The Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament will continue to show solidarity and support for the people of the entire island of Ireland throughout this Brexit period. If there's one silver lining to the UK leaving it's that the value of the EU is being shown through our shared unity and respect."

Lambert's message comes after UK Prime Minister Theresa May met EU leaders in Brussels on Thursday and announced that the UK and EU negotiating teams would shortly resume talks.

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Speaking afterwards, May said that the UK "must secure legally-binding changes to the Withdrawal Agreement to deal with the concerns that Parliament has over the backstop," adding, "Taking that together with the other work that we are doing on workers' rights and other issues will deliver a stable majority in the UK Parliament."

She acknowledged the process "is not going to be easy" but insisted, "I am going to deliver Brexit. I am going to deliver it on time."

## APOLOGY DEMANDED

Elsewhere, Tom Vandendriessche, spokesperson for the ENF group, said his group would demand that European Council President Donald Tusk apologise for his comments that Brexiteers deserved a "special place in hell."

At a briefing in Parliament on Friday, Vandendriessche said, "We deplore Tusk's statement which also demonstrates the unwillingness of certain EU officials to work for an agreement and [it] is profoundly distasteful."

"If there's one silver lining to the UK leaving [the EU] it's that the value of the EU is being shown through our shared unity and respect" Philippe Lamberts MEP

Meanwhile, in a joint statement with Theresa May, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said he had "underlined that the EU27 will not reopen the Withdrawal Agreement" but added that the political declaration on the future relationship could be "more ambitious in terms of content and speed."

Meanwhile, Donald Tusk said there was "still no breakthrough in sight" and that "talks will continue."

## BACKSTOP PLEDGE

Meanwhile, the European Parliament's Brexit coordinator, Guy Verhofstadt, said that May "assured us that there will be a backstop."

He added, "There is no question to remove the backstop because that is absolutely necessary for securing and safeguarding the Good Friday Agreement."

Separately, there were reports that a new version of the Brexit deal could come back to Parliament at the end of March, requiring an extension of Article 50, while EU diplomats are quoted as saying that final decisions could be taken at the European Council summit on March 22.

## About the author

Martin Banks is a senior reporter at The Parliament Magazine

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