



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

The Rt Hon. David Lammy MP
Secretary of State for Foreign,
Commonwealth and Development
Affairs

King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

Email:

fcdo.correspondence@fcdo.gov.uk

17 September 2024

Dear Peter,

EUROPEAN POLITICAL COMMUNITY AND MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Thank you for your letter dated 29 July.

By way of background, the Prime Minister gave an oral statement on the European Political Community to the House of Commons on Monday 22 July, which was repeated in the House of Lords on Tuesday 23 July.

Both the Prime Minister and I were delighted to host the summit so early in this government's tenure. At Blenheim, we demonstrated a shared, continent-wide commitment to work together to meet the challenges we face. It was the first step in the resetting of our relationship with Europe, which I am committed to delivering across this parliamentary term.

On Ukraine, the summit made clear once again that Europe will do what is required for as long as it takes. 44 countries agreed in the margins of the EPC on the need to tackle the Russian Shadow Fleet.

I was also pleased that for the first time the EPC could directly address shared challenges posed by irregular migration, looking at how we could collectively tackle people smuggling and might take a whole of route approach to finding a more sustainable status quo.

On energy, we emphasised the need for regional solutions to finding more affordable, secure and sustainable energy. And on defending democracy, we set out the practical steps that we can take – both at national and international level – to build a more comprehensive and resilient response to foreign information manipulation and interference.

In future, I hope that the EPC will continue to provide an even more effective forum to demonstrate continental cooperation on these issues. We will now engage with Hungary, Albania and Denmark in a new Quad format to ensure that we are maximising continuity between meetings, whilst retaining the informality and space for bilateral conversations that makes this format such a success.

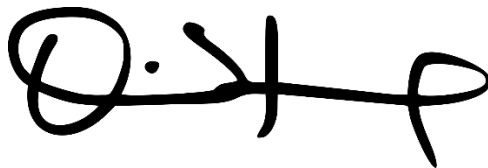
Separately, I wanted to draw your attention to the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) that was laid on Wednesday 24 July (HLSW18 'Machinery of Government'), which detailed Machinery of Government changes across Government. The WMS announced that the FCDO will remain responsible for bilateral relationships, including with our European partners, the Gibraltar negotiations and Europe strategy, using my department's diplomatic expertise. The Ministerial structures under the UK's treaties with the European Union will move to the Cabinet Office. The Paymaster General, as Minister for the Constitution and European Union Relations, will drive the Government's European Union agenda, overseeing the existing relationship, and leading the cross-government work to deepen our relationship with the EU in the future.

Finally, I note your request for an evidence session and have asked my officials to liaise with your Committee's clerks.

Please accept my thanks again for your engagement and interest in the EPC, and I look forward to working with you in the future as we reset our relations with our European partners.

A copy of this letter will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Lammy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

THE RT HON. DAVID LAMMY MP
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs