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15 October 2018

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Ms Golding

Thank you for your letter of 21 September.


I would like to reassure you that the Government takes extremely seriously the position of UK nationals living in the EU. I know that this has been a time of considerable anxiety for you and your families. This is why I have always sought to prioritise citizens' rights in our discussions with the EU, and why I wanted to reach agreement on this at the earliest possible stage. I resisted calls to put forward a unilateral UK position before we had secured similar assurance for all nationals in the EU and I am pleased that we were able to do so in December 2017. I want to be clear that our aim remains to agree a deep and special partnership with the EU, and that we both want and expect to reach a deal.

It is also a time of uncertainty for EU citizens in the UK and now that we have an agreement on citizens' rights I believe it was important to reassure them that their rights will be protected whatever the outcome of the negotiations.

It is of utmost importance to me and the whole Government that all UK citizens know that they are able to stay in the EU country they have made their home, and that their status will be secure in the future, whatever happens. The UK cannot act unilaterally to protect the rights of UK nationals in the EU in a no deal scenario but we are pressing Member States to respond to the guarantees we have given, and confirm the same for UK nationals. We need action from national governments as well as EU institutions on this crucial issue. Senior ministers and I are raising this with our EU counterparts. Our embassies are also engaging across EU capitals to this end. I am pleased that the Danish Prime Minister has already confirmed that, regardless of the results of the negotiations, British citizens in Denmark will be looked after.

I know that you are meeting Robin Walker, Minister at the Department for Exiting the European Union, in the coming weeks to discuss the work the Government is doing to ensure that UK citizens will be able to continue to live in the EU regardless of the outcome of the negotiations. The Government is committed to working closely with you over the coming weeks and months to protect the rights of UK nationals in the EU.

Thank you, once again, for writing.

Yours sincerely  


Ms Jane Golding