

Chairman's Statement 11th July 2016

Since the referendum result, we have been holding informal discussions with friends and allies from left to right of the political spectrum about the best way to keep pressure on the government to deliver its BREXIT promise.

In the midst of such discussions on 11th July, we heard that that Mrs Leadsom had withdrawn from the Conservative leadership election and that Mrs. May would therefore be the new Prime Minister – and very much more quickly than expected.

Whilst many campaigners would have preferred a Brexit campaigner, Mrs May has reasserted her determination to deliver BREXIT and she now effectively has another two months to hasten the process. We intend to give her every encouragement in that.

Mr. Cameron was so confident of a “Remain” vote that he had forbidden the civil service to make any “Plan B” for leaving. So it would be ridiculous to urge the government into prematurely starting negotiations before it has had time to formulate its policy and negotiating strategy.

There is a period now when the Independence Movement has an opportunity to make its views known to those in authority before negotiations with the EU start. This has come rather sooner and more urgently than we expected.

We have to bear in mind the parameters under which the decisions will be made and to be realistic. In the House of Commons roughly half the Conservative party, the DUP and the Labour rebels were for BREXIT. The other half of the Conservative party and everybody else was either pro EU or at least EU-acquiescent – an overwhelmingly Europhile House. The House of Lords is even more solidly (and rather defiantly)

Europhile.

So the delivery of BREXIT will largely depend on the discipline of the Conservative party in keeping its Europhile MPs to its policy of leaving the EU. Some people have demanded a general election but we now have fixed term parliaments. This one has nearly four years to run – an adequate time for the government to deliver its promise and to have an independence settlement in place, up and running by the time of the next general election in May 2020. We in CIB want to do everything to ensure that this is what happens and that the terms are the most favourable possible from a trade point of view whilst establishing unequivocally that our country is definitively, irrevocably independent from the EU's political project.

Shouting slogans will not do it. We have to focus our efforts in a disciplined way and apply them to the situation as it exists. This we are trying to do to the best effect but it is going to take some more time to establish a common general approach amongst the diverse Independence Movement.