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The Chronology of the Negotiations that Led to the Historic Moment of the Signing of the Brexit Agreement

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Abstract: The reality is that we have witnessed in the last 4 years, since the procedure of negotiating the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union in 2016 has started, a real political impasse on the stage of European relations. Who would have imagined on the 1st of January 1973, when England became a member of the European Union after many indecisions – some of them more arrogant than others that in 47 years' time it will be the first Member State to avail itself of Article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon, which for the first time provided for the right of a Member State to withdraw voluntarily from the European Union? If we look a little at the historical context of England's accession to the EU, we may see similar hesitations that have delayed it so much in joining the EU. Although after the end of the Second World War the economic situation of England was precarious, it still manages to become one of the great world powers. However, in 1951 it refused to join the founding group of the ECSC and also refused to sign the Treaty of Rome in 1957. England believed that the status of leader of the Commonwealth offered you a privileged status compared to other European states in international affairs, especially those with the United States of America, but, nevertheless, it did not bring benefits in the relations with the 6 European states, that were going to establish the European Union. When it realized that this was not a good way for things to happen, in 1961 announced its intention to join the European Economic Community, only that in 1963 France voted against the request. It was only after Charles de Gaulle's resignation in 1969 that the United Kingdom's path to accession was opened. Political and economic integration seemed to be the best solution for achieving a stable economic future.

Keywords: *Brexit, international law, European Union, negotiations, euro area.*

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I. Introduction

What is happening now in the European Union is certainly an epoch-making moment. But we cannot fully understand this phenomenon if we do not compare, at least in general, with the delicate situation of Greece. It seems to be a number of useful lessons in the context of Brexit. „The first is that the power of negotiation is never that of an isolated, individual country. This means that the EU can never be blackmailed or divided by building conventional alliances, especially by the *departure* of a state. Nor will a Member State challenge the bureaucracy of politicians, because no political negotiation can ignore legal or technical issues" (1)[1] Like Greece, the United Kingdom lacked an understanding of the political and institutional dynamics of the European Union. This has led to the negotiation of flawed strategies, based on misconceptions about the size of the mechanisms that the UK could use. The UK government also lacked a clear long-term strategy. Waiting to leave the Union was not enough. It must be planned on how to do it and what to expect afterwards. As for Grexit, time has worked in favor of the European Union. By 2015, the EU was better prepared to manage a possible Grexit, as is now the case with Brexit. The initial fear of contamination after the moment of June 2016 (when on 23rd of June 2016 the citizens of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland voted approximately 52% for the country to leave the European Union), the result of the UK referendum gave the possibility of a cohesive front surprisingly, no doubt aided by broader geopolitical considerations over the United States and China. Rather than favoring centrifugal forces, Brexit is thawing increased confidence in the EU and the eurozone. The truth is that the EU has handled Brexit through a combination of principles, bureaucracy and rules. Moreover, the UK's symbolic domestic decisions on Brexit have strengthened the European Union's inclination to adopt caution and a lack of strategic perspectives, as it did during the eurozone crisis.

II. Signing the Brexit Agreement - a crucial moment in the development of European relations

[1] Was said by Roch Dunin-Wasowich in The Grexit that never happened offers some lessons for the UK, on https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/03/07/the-grexit-that-never-happened-offers-some-lessons-for-the-uk /, accessed on 26 January 2020.

The evolution, in short, of this historic moment is the following: on the 24th of January 2020, the *Brexit Agreement on the exit of Great Britain from the EU* was signed; the signatories to the Agreement are the Presidents of the European Commission and the Council; the agreement is approved by the United Kingdom to allow its ratification by the European Parliament. „With the official agreement of Ursula von der Leyen and Charles Michel, the text will now be submitted to the European Parliament for ratification on the 29th of January 2020. Then, on 30th of January 2020, EU Member States' diplomats will approve the report in writing, ensuring thus the withdrawal of the United Kingdom on the 31st of January at midnight" (2)[2]. On the 27th of January, the agreement will be initialed by Prime Minister Boris Johnson. We mention that Queen Elizabeth II gave her consent to the text regulating the modalities of separation after 47 years of Great Britain's membership in the EU. The text had already been finally adopted on the 22nd of January 2020 by the British Parliament. The President of the Council is of the opinion that things will inevitably change, but he hopes that the friendship with the United Kingdom will last over time and that a new chapter will open as partners and allies. We appreciate that this statement highlighted the major importance given to maintaining the stability of international and European relations and a pacifist climate of European cooperation and security, given that we are going through a period of unstable and tense international relations, but we will discuss these issues in a future article.

The European Parliament is the last to rule on the agreement. MEPs, members of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, recommended by a majority of 23 votes to three that the text be approved in plenary session on the 29th of January.

The official separation is accompanied by a transitional period until the end of 2020. The United Kingdom will continue to apply EU rules during this period, without, however, taking part in Community decisions. This will allow for a calm retreat. The respite will also allow the two sides to negotiate their future relationship, in particular, a trade agreement. But time is considered too short for such a negotiation.

We consider that an important moment of Brexit is considered the 29th of March 2017, when the United Kingdom officially notified the European Council of its intention to leave the EU. However, we cannot continue the analysis of the Brexit phenomenon and the effects it will

[2] Quoted from Agerpres; see also on https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/exteme/moment-istoric-acordul-pentru-brexit-a-fost- validat-de-comisia-europeana-1249974, accessed on: January 26, 2020.

produce, without taking into account the international legal instruments that were taken into account in the negotiation process of the Agreement. These important documents are:

- Draft Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community of 18th of October 2019;
- Revised political statement setting out the framework for future EU-UK relations on the 17th of October 2019;
- Guidelines of the European Council (art. 50) on the framework of the future relationship between the EU and the United Kingdom, of the 23rd of March 2018;
- Negotiating directives on the transition period, from the 29th of January 2018;
- Guidelines of the European Council (art. 50) for the Brexit negotiations, of 15th of December 2017;
- Brexit: negotiating directives, from the 22nd of May 2017;
- European Council guidelines (art. 50) for the Brexit negotiations, dated 29th of April 2017;
- Negotiating documents for negotiations under Article 50 (European Commission).

The agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom comprises the following steps:

On the 18th of October 2019, EU-27 leaders called on the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council to take the necessary steps to ensure that the agreement can enter into force. This procedure consists of five steps:

„1. The Commission shall adopt:

- a proposal for a Council decision on the signing of the withdrawal agreement
- a proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of the withdrawal agreement

The Commission adopted both proposals on the 19th October 2019.

2. The Council (Article 50) shall:

- adopt the decision on signing the withdrawal agreement
- approve the decision on the conclusion of the withdrawal agreement and forward it to the European Parliament for approval

The Council (Article 50) adopted the decision regarding its signature on the 21st of October 2019. On the same day, the Council approved the

adapted draft decision on the conclusion of the withdrawal agreement and decided to forward that draft decision to the European Parliament.

3. The European Parliament shall give its assent by a simple majority of its component Members.

4. The Council (Article 50) shall take a decision on the conclusion of the withdrawal agreement. For the purpose of this adoption, the Council shall act by a qualified consolidated majority at EU-27 level (at least 20 Member States comprising at least 65% of the population of EU-27 Member States).

5. The President of the Council shall inform the depositary of the withdrawal agreement (the Secretary-General of the Council) in writing of the completion of the internal procedures necessary for this purpose.

Regarding the European Union's reaction to Brexit, we note that at the October 2019 summit, EU leaders recorded the withdrawal agreement and approved the political declaration on the future EU-UK relationship. The agreement paves the way for an organized departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union. On the 24th of January 2019, the EU and the United Kingdom signed the withdrawal agreement. The plenary session of the European Parliament reserved its vote on the issue until January 29. Once Parliament had given its consent, the Council adopted by written procedure the decision on the conclusions of the agreement by the Union. Once the withdrawal agreement is adopted, it will enter into force as soon as the United Kingdom leaves the Union on the 31st of January 2020 at 12 noon, Brussels time. In fact, in December 2019, the leaders of the European Union reconfirmed their goal of establishing the closest possible post-Brexit relations with the United Kingdom" (3)[3].

III. Chronology of the negotiations of the Agreement for the exit of the United Kingdom from the EU

We report concretely, in stages, the most important moments in the negotiation process of the withdrawal from the Union of the United Kingdom, starting the analysis from the moment of the referendum:

On the 23rd of June 2016, British citizens voted in favor of leaving the European Union. The election was followed by intense negotiations on an agreement to strengthen the UK's special status in the EU.

On the 24th of June 2016, President Donald Tusk issued a statement on the outcome of the referendum, showing that the United Kingdom had taken into account a negative scenario in the negotiations. Also on the 24th

[3] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/brexit/, accessed on the 26th of January 2020.

of June, a joint statement was issued by EU leaders and the Dutch presidency on the outcome of the UK referendum, stating that „in a free and democratic process, the British people have expressed their desire to leave the European Union. We regret this decision, but we respect it "(said President Tusk, President Juncker, President Schulz and Dutch Prime Minister Rutte in their joint statement), continuing that "as established, the document entitled, "A new agreement for the Kingdom United in the European Union", agreed at the European Council of 18-19 February 2016, will no longer enter into force and will no longer exist. There will be no renegotiation" (4)[4].

On the 28th of June 2016, the European Council discussed the outcome of the UK referendum, which took place on the 23rd of June 2016, and focused on the outcome of the referendum. Prime Minister David Cameron explained the situation in the United Kingdom following the referendum.

The informal meeting of the 27 EU Heads of State or Government took place on 29th of June 2016, at which the 27 leaders agreed to meet again on the 16th September in Bratislava to continue talks and expressed their will regarding unity and cooperation within the EU in order to find solutions in the interest of "European nations and peoples". They also called on the UK government to notify the European Council as soon as possible of its intention to withdraw from the EU.

On the 8th of September 2016, British Prime Minister Theresa May entered the scene and had a meeting with EU leaders.

On the 2nd of October 2016, the United Kingdom announced that it intends to trigger the application of Article 50 by the end of March 2017, according to Theresa May.

On the 13th of October 2016, Donald Tusk claims that the only real alternative to a "tough Brexit" is "no Brexit", amid escalating and amplifying talks for and against Brexit. He reiterated the idea that the main task during the withdrawal negotiations will be to protect the interests of the EU and the interests of each of the 27 countries and to draw attention to the fact that access to the European single market requires the acceptance of the EU's four freedoms: the free movement of people, goods, capital and services.

On the 29th of November 2016, Donald Tusk responded to concerns expressed by members of the British Parliament about the status of EU and UK citizens living and working in Europe, saying that he intended to avoid the situation where citizens would become "currency" in the process of

[4] Quoted source: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/policies/eu-uk-after-referendiin/#

negotiation. In addition, in order for this not to happen, he says that precise and comprehensive solutions will be needed to provide citizens with real security guarantees.

At the end of 2016, the negotiation procedure begins on 15th of December. At their informal meeting in December 2016, the 27 leaders and presidents of the European Council and the European Commission made a statement stating that they were ready to start negotiations with the United Kingdom as soon as the United Kingdom forwarded its Article 50 notification.

They also agreed on the following procedure for future discussions on Brexit:

1. The United Kingdom shall invoke Article 50 by notification to the European Council of its intention to leave the Union.

2. The 27 EU leaders adopt "guidelines", which include general principles and positions for negotiations. They will update the guidelines during the negotiations, as needed.

3. Following a recommendation from the Commission, the General Affairs Council shall authorize the opening of negotiations.

4. The Council shall adopt negotiating directives on the substance of the negotiations and the detailed institutional arrangements. These can be modified and completed throughout the negotiations.

5. The Council will appoint the Commission as the negotiator on behalf of the Union, which will negotiate on behalf of the 27. The Commission has appointed Michel Barnier as Chief Negotiator. The Commission will report to the leaders and the Council throughout the negotiations and will also inform the European Parliament „closely and regularly".

6. The Council, together with its preparatory bodies, will ensure that negotiations are conducted in accordance with EU-27 guidelines. It will provide guidance to the Commission.

"We have adopted the organizational structure, according to which the European Council maintains political control over the process, and the Commission is the Union's negotiator," President Tusk said after the meeting (5).[5]

The year 2017 begins on the 21st of March with the convening of a European Council on Brexit by Donald Tusk scheduled for the 29th of April 2017. The Special European Council, in the EU 27 formula, aimed to adopt guidelines for discussions on Brexit.

[5] Quoted source: https://wvm.consiliim.europa.eWro/policies/eu-uk-after-referendum/#

On the 29th of March, the United Kingdom formally invokes Article 50 to leave the EU. In this regard, the United Kingdom has formally notified the European Council of its intention to leave the EU.

The Draft Guidelines were published on the 31st of March 2017. President Tusk outlined the main elements of the proposal at a press conference he held that day in Malta.

On the 29th of April, EU-27 leaders met at the first summit since the UK officially launched Article 50. They unanimously adopted guidelines for future Brexit talks. They will define the negotiating framework and set out the EU's general positions and principles.

On the 3rd of May, the European Commission recommends a draft project for negotiating directives. Thus, the Commission presented to the Council (at Coreper level) a recommendation for a Council decision on the Brexit negotiations. It includes draft negotiating directives (a detailed mandate for the Commission). Based on this recommendation, on the 22nd of May 2017, the General Affairs Council had to authorize the opening of negotiations, appoint the Commission as EU negotiator and adopt the negotiating directives.

On the 19th of May, the EU's 27 permanent representatives approved the principles of transparency. The Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper), meeting in the EU 27 formula, endorsed the guidelines for transparency in the Brexit negotiations. These principles have facilitated the effective information of public opinion on the unprecedented negotiations that have followed. All negotiating documents that the EU negotiator (Commission) has communicated to the Council, the European Parliament and the United Kingdom have been made available to the public, within the limits of EU law. The rules on transparency and public access to documents apply to all documents in the context of Brexit negotiations.

On the 22nd of May 2017, the Council, meeting in EU-27 formula, adopted a decision authorizing the start of Brexit negotiations with the United Kingdom. The decision also designated the European Commission as the EU's negotiator.

On the 19th of June 2017, Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator, and David Davis, the European Union's exit minister, opened the first round of Brexit negotiations. This one-day event took place in Brussels. In addition to the structure of the negotiations and future issues, the opening of the negotiations focused on:

- issues related to citizens' rights;
- financial statement;
- the border of Northern Ireland;

- other aspects related to separation.

Along with the representatives of the European Commission, the representatives of the President of the European Council were present and participated in the negotiations, having a supporting role. The EU negotiator systematically reported to the European Council, the Council and its preparatory bodies.

On the 20th of July 2017, Michel Bamier, the EU's chief negotiator, and David Davis, the EU's exit minister, concluded the second round of Brexit negotiations. The aim of this round, which lasted four days and took place in Brussels, was for each party to present its position. Following the round of negotiations, a note was published identifying the points of agreement and disagreement on the issue of citizens' rights.

The third round of Brexit negotiations began on 28 August 2017 in Brussels. Michel Bamier, the EU's chief negotiator, and David Davis, the minister in charge with the withdrawl of UK from the European Union, have opened the negotiations. During this round, work continued on the main issues concerning an orderly withdrawal from the United Kingdom:

- With regard to citizens' rights, EU and UK negotiators continued to examine and compare their respective positions, in particular some issues that had not yet been addressed in previous rounds, such as professional qualifications and economic rights. The outcome of these discussions is reflected in an updated comparative document, approved by mutual agreement by the parties in the negotiating round.
- with regard to the financial statement, both sides continued the discussions initiated in previous rounds, in particular by comparing each party's legal analyzes of the United Kingdom's obligations to the EU;
- discussions took place on issues related to Ireland and the general governance of the withdrawal agreement;
- The negotiators also discussed other issues related to unbundling (Euratom, goods placed on the market, ongoing Union procedures, judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters).

On the 26th of September, President Donald Tusk met with Prime Minister Theresa May in London. The President of the European Council met with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in London, while a fourth round of negotiations was taking place in Brussels.

The fourth round of Brexit negotiations began on the 25th of September 2017 in Brussels. Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator, and

David Davis, the British exit minister, closed the round of negotiations on the 28th of September, 2017.

The fifth round of Brexit negotiations began on the 9th of October 2017 in Brussels. Michel Bamier, the EU's chief negotiator, and David Davis, the British exit minister from the European Union, closed the round of negotiations on the 12th of October, 2017.

With regard to citizens' rights, the EU and the United Kingdom have common goals:

- the withdrawal agreement shall have direct effects, which is essential for the effective guarantee of the rights of all citizens;
- that the interpretation of these rights be fully consistent in the European Union and the United Kingdom.

The EU also had to consider at that time the United Kingdom's proposal for a new and simplified administrative procedure through which EU citizens in the United Kingdom could exercise their rights. The EU insisted that such a procedure be as accessible and simple as possible.

Regarding Ireland:

- steps have been taken to maintain the common travel area;
- more in-depth reflection is needed to identify solutions to the challenges posed by North-South cooperation;
- An agreement was reached on the six principles proposed by the EU to protect the Good Friday Agreement and all its dimensions.
- Regarding the financial statement:
- After confirming that it will honor its commitments during its EU membership, the United Kingdom has shown that it is unable to specify this week what commitments it is;
- Technical discussions were therefore held, but negotiations did not progress, with Michel Barnier expressing growing concern about the stalemate affecting this issue.

On the 20th of October, the European Council (Article 50), meeting in the EU-27 formula, agreed to start internal preparations for the second stage of the Brexit negotiations. EU-27 leaders called for more progress in the following three areas:

- citizens' rights
- Ireland
- financial obligations

They also said that at the December summit they would reassess the state of progress to determine whether "sufficient progress" had been made on each of the three issues mentioned above. The European Council invited

the Council (Article 50), together with the Union negotiator, to launch preparatory internal discussions on the framework for future relations and on a possible transitional regime.

The sixth round of Brexit negotiations began on 9th of November 2017 in Brussels. Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator, and David Davis, the British exit minister from the European Union, closed the round of negotiations on the 10th of November 2017. The EU's chief negotiator said some further progress had been made on certain technical details, but that a number of issues still need to be clarified in order to make sufficient progress. In particular, not enough progress has yet been made on the three components of the first stage of the negotiations:

- citizens' rights;
- Ireland;
- financial obligations.

On the 15th of December 2017, the European Council (Article 50), in the EU-27 formula, reviewed the latest developments in the negotiations following the notification sent by the United Kingdom on its intention to leave the EU. Leaders reassessed the state of progress in the Brexit negotiations and confirmed that sufficient progress had been made on:

- citizens' rights;
- Ireland;
- financial obligations.

Following the intervention of Michel Barnier, the Commission's chief negotiator, the leaders adopted guidelines for moving to the second stage of the Brexit negotiations.

On the 29th of January 2018, EU 27 Ministers adopted a new set of negotiating directives for Brexit negotiations, which set out in detail the EU 27 position on a transition period. According to the EU position, during the transition period:

- the entire EU acquis will continue to apply to the United Kingdom, as if it were a Member State;
- being already a third country, The United Kingdom will no longer take part in the functioning of the institutions and the EU decision-making process.

These negotiating directives give the Commission, in its capacity as EU negotiator, a mandate to start discussions with the United Kingdom on this issue.

The seventh round of Brexit negotiations took place between the 6th and 9th of February 2018 in Brussels and was the first round of the second

stage of negotiations. This was preceded by an informal meeting on 5 February in London between Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator, and David Davis, the British exit minister.

The EU and the United Kingdom focused in particular on the following three issues:

- transition period;
- Ireland, especially solutions to avoid a strictly controlled border;
- the governance of the withdrawal agreement.

On the 28th of February, the European Commission published the draft withdrawal agreement between the European Union and the United Kingdom. The draft withdrawal agreement transposes into legal terms the Joint Report of the European Union and UK Government negotiators of December 2017 on the first stage of the negotiations. It also proposes a text based on EU positions on other withdrawal issues which are mentioned in the joint report but which have not been agreed so far. Finally, it includes the text on the transitional period, which is based on the additional negotiating directives adopted by the Council (Article 50) on the 29th of January 2018. The agreement comprises six parts and a protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland. These parts cover the following areas:

- introductory provisions;
- citizens' rights;
- other issues related to separation, such as goods placed on the market before the date of withdrawal and the transitional regime;
- financial provisions;
- institutional provisions.

On the 19th of March 2018, following negotiations on 13-19 March 2018, EU and UK negotiators presented a draft version of the withdrawal agreement which illustrates the progress made so far in the talks. This color version identifies the parties to the withdrawal agreement on which the two parties have agreed on the legal text, including:

- citizens' rights;
- financial settelment;
- transition period;
- issues related to separation.

With regard to the Northern Ireland-Ireland border issue, the negotiators agreed that a legally functional version of the protection solution should be agreed as an integral part of the legal text of the withdrawal agreement. This solution had to correspond to what was agreed in

December 2017 in the joint report and will be applied only in the absence of another solution and until another solution is found.

The Informal Meeting in Salzburg took place between 19 and 20 September 2018. The meeting ended with a working lunch on the EU 27 formula to discuss Brexit. On this occasion, the progress made in the negotiations with the United Kingdom was reviewed and discussions were held on the way forward. The 27 leaders reconfirmed their fully united position and agreed:

- that no withdrawal agreement will be concluded in the absence of a sound, functional and legally binding protection solution for the Irish;
- adopt a joint political statement that provides as much clarity as possible regarding future relations;
- on the timetable for the next negotiations.

On the 15th of November 2018, we can say that decisive progress has been made in the Brexit negotiations. EU Chief Negotiator Michel Barnier handed him the draft text of President Donald Tusk's Brexit Agreement, which he proposed be finalized and formalized at the extraordinary summit on November 25, 2018.

On the 22nd of November, the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, forwarded to the EU-27 Member States the draft political declaration setting out the framework for future EU-UK relations. The declaration had been agreed at the level of negotiators and agreed in principle at the political level, subject to approval by the leaders.

On the 25th of November, EU 27 leaders approved the draft UK withdrawal agreement and the draft political declaration on future EU-UK relations.

On the 5th of December 2018, the European Commission launches the procedure for signing and concluding the agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU. Following the European Council (Article 50) dated 25 November 2018, the Commission adopted two proposals for Council Decisions on the signing and conclusion of the Agreement.

On the 11th of January 2019, the Council (Article 50) adopted a decision on the signing of the withdrawal agreement. The Council also adopted a draft decision on the conclusion of the withdrawal agreement and decided to forward that draft decision to the European Parliament for approval.

On the 7th of February 2019, the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, met in Brussels with the British Prime Minister, Theresa May, to discuss how the situation regarding Brexit can be unblocked.

On the 11th of March 2019, the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Theresa May, met in Strasbourg, where they agreed on the text of the following documents:

- an instrument on the withdrawal agreement, which provides clarifications and legal guarantees on the nature of the protection solution;
- a joint statement in addition to the political statement, which sets out the framework for future relations.

The texts had been previously agreed at negotiator level. They were approved by the European Commission on the 11th of March 2019. On the 21st of March 2019, the European Council (Article 50) approved in its conclusions both the instrument and the joint declaration.

On the 20th of March 2019, President Tusk's statement on the request for an extension of the Brexit deadline was launched.

On the 21st of March 2019, EU27 leaders offered an extension of the deadline for Brexit until May 22, 2019.

On the 22nd of March 2019, the European Council (Article 50) adopted a decision formalizing the political agreement reached on the 21st of March 2019 on the extension of the deadline under Article 50. In accordance with the Treaties, the decision was adopted in agreement with the United Kingdom.

The fact that the United Kingdom gave its consent was presented in a letter from the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative to the European Union, Sir Tim Barrow, on the 22nd of March 2019.

On 5 April, the United Kingdom will request an additional extension. Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, has sent a letter to Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, requesting a further extension of the deadline set out in Article 50. She proposed the 30th of June 2019, adding that the UK government will continue to prepare for the holding of elections to the European Parliament if the United Kingdom becomes a member at the time of the elections.

At the extraordinary summit on 10 April, EU leaders agreed to extend the Article 50 deadline until the end of October 2019. If the withdrawal agreement is ratified by both parties earlier, the UK will leave the EU on the first day of the next month. The decision was taken in agreement with the United Kingdom.

On the 17th of October 2019, an agreement was reached at the level of negotiators. The European Commission recommended to the European Council (Article 50) to approve the revised withdrawal agreement, including

a revised Ireland / Northern Ireland Protocol, as well as the revised political statement setting out the framework for future EU-UK relations. The agreement reached on the 17th of October 2019 is the result of intense negotiations carried out in the previous days between the negotiators of the European Commission and those of the United Kingdom.

On the 19th of October 2019, the United Kingdom sends a request for an extension of the deadline for Brexit. The United Kingdom has addressed a request to the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, to extend the deadline under Article 50 until the 31st of January 2020.

On the 21st of October, the EU Council takes the first official step towards concluding the withdrawal agreement. The Council (Article 50) adopted the decision on the signing of the withdrawal agreement. The Council (Article 50) also approved the adapted draft Council Decision on the conclusion of the Agreement, which will now be forwarded to the European Parliament with a view to resolving the pending request for approval. This stage took place through the written procedure. This is following the approval by the European Council (Article 50) of the withdrawal agreement agreed by the negotiators of both parties on the 17th of October 2019. In their conclusions, EU 27 leaders called on the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council to ensure that the agreement can enter into force on the 1st of November 2019.

On the 29th of October 2019, „the European Council extends the deadline for Brexit. The European Council adopted a decision to extend the deadline under Article 50 (3), in view of the United Kingdom 's intention to withdraw from the EU. The extension lasts until the 31st of January 2020 in order to allow more time for the ratification of the Withdrawal Agreement. The United Kingdom may leave the European Union earlier, on the 1st of December 2019 or on the 1st of January 2020, if the agreement is ratified by both parties. The decision was taken unanimously by the European Council, by written procedure, with the agreement of the United Kingdom.

On the 13th of December 2019, EU leaders prepared for the post-Brexit negotiations. EU27 leaders discussed Brexit and preparations for the negotiation of the future EU-UK relationship after the letter. On this occasion, they reaffirmed their desire to establish the closest possible relations with the United Kingdom.

On the 22nd of January 2020, EU27 ambassadors endorsed the principles of transparency for post-Brexit negotiations. The Standing Representative Committee (Coreper), meeting in the EU27 format, approved the Guidelines for Transparency in the Negotiations on Future Relations with the United Kingdom. These principles will facilitate the

public scrutiny available during the negotiations. All EU negotiating documents as a negotiator (Commission) which are sent to EU Member States, the Council, the European Parliament, the national parliaments of the United Kingdom, will be transmitted to the public, within the limits of European law. The rules of transparency and public access to documents will apply to all documents in the context of negotiations. EU ambassadors also agreed to use the written procedure for the adoption of:

- Council Decision establishing the new United Kingdom Working Committee;
- Council Decision on the conclusions of the withdrawal agreement" (6).[6]

On the 24st of January 2020, the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union was officially signed. The European Parliament will vote on the matter on the 29th of January 2020. Once Parliament has given its consent, the Council will, by written procedure, take a decision on the conclusions of the agreement on behalf of the European Union. Once adopted, the Agreement will enter into force once the United Kingdom leaves the EU on the 31st of January 2020 at midnight (Brussels time, 23:00 Romanian time).

IV. Conclusions

The idea behind this analysis is that the European Union and the United Kingdom are determined to work together to ensure an international order based on rules, the rule of law and the promotion of democracy, as well as high standards of free and fair trade and rights of workers, consumer and environmental protection, as well as cooperation to combat internal and external threats to their values and interests. It is clear that future relations are intended to be based on a balance between rights and obligations, taking into account the principles of each party. This balance must ensure the autonomy of the Union's decision-making process and be consistent with the principles of the Union, in particular as regards the integrity of the single market and the customs union and the indivisibility of the four freedoms, as stipulated in the final part of the Agreement on State withdrawal. United Nations and the Atomic Energy Community of 12th of November 2019. It must also ensure the sovereignty of the United Kingdom and the protection

[6] Data collected from: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/policies/eu-uk-after-referendum/#

of its internal market, while respecting the outcome of the 2016 referendum, including on the development of its independent trade policy and the end of the free movement of persons between the Union and the United Kingdom.

The period of the United Kingdom's membership of the Union has led to a high level of integration of the economies of the Union and the United Kingdom and to an intertwining of the past and future of people and priorities in the Union and the United Kingdom. Future relationships will inevitably have to take this unique context into account. Although future relations cannot guarantee the same rights or obligations as those arising from membership of the Union, the parties agreed that they should be approached with a high level of ambition in terms of their scope and depth and recognize that -over time- the approach could evolve. First of all, relations should be in the interests of the citizens of the Union and the United Kingdom, now and in the future.

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