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Update on common frameworks and intergovernmental relations: Written statement
- HCWS1687

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03 July 2019

Today I have published four documents providing an update on progress towards the formation of the common UK frameworks. These include;

1. a progress report on the formation of the common frameworks;
2. a document outlining key phases necessary to deliver the common frameworks and;
3. an outline framework relating to Hazardous Substances Planning.
4. a set of draft principles for intergovernmental relations.

Publication of these documents reflects the considerable programme of work we have undertaken with the devolved administrations as part of our preparations for EU Exit and beyond.

Together with the devolved administrations, we continue to make significant progress in the development of common frameworks. This work is underpinned by the framework's principles agreed with the Scottish and Welsh Governments in October 2017 at JMC(EN). Since then, the UK Government has published two iterations of the frameworks analysis, in March 2018 and April 2019 respectively, which set out all the policy areas where EU law intersects with devolved competence and our approach in each. We have also published three statutory reports setting out progress on common frameworks under the terms of the EU (Withdrawal) Act. These reflect the fact that, based on the good work done to date, the UK Government has not brought forward any section 12 regulations under that legislation. The Scottish and Welsh governments have in turn agreed not to diverge in areas where policy discussions are ongoing.

The documents published today reflect the latest developments in this area of work and are intended to underline the UK Government's commitment to transparency in this area, and facilitate a more detailed process of scrutiny by Parliament and wider stakeholders.

I am also enclosing a set of draft principles for intergovernmental relations. A review of intergovernmental relations was commissioned by the Joint Ministerial Committee (Plenary), consisting of the Prime Minister and the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales on 14 March 2018. The UK Government and the devolved administrations continue to work closely with on this joint review of the existing Memorandum of Understanding between us.

The draft principles for intergovernmental relations were developed jointly by a working group of representatives of all four administrations. The principles are intended to establish a solid foundation for the ways in which all four administrations will work together in the future. They will be presented for formal adoption to a future Joint Ministerial Committee (Plenary) and, subject to the timing of its re-establishment, to a new Northern Ireland Executive for its endorsement.

The UK Government and the devolved administrations are committed to making rapid and substantive progress on the review. This will include agreeing a joint plan of next steps, developing a clear timeline covering all four remaining workstreams of the review. This will focus in particular on dispute avoidance and the role of an independent element in the process for resolving any future intergovernmental disputes which might arise.

This statement has also been made in the House of Lords: HLWS1648