

EU leaders APPROVE Theresa May's Brexit deal finally letting Britain move on to next round of talks

The EU's 27 national leaders today gave final approval to Theresa May's first-round Brexit deal.

The Prime Minister's victory after months of battling was announced by European Council President Donald Tusk who tweeted her: "Congratulations."

It finally gives Britain permission to start negotiating about a two-year transition period and future trade.

Today's long-expected confirmation came after her agreement on citizens' rights, Northern Ireland and the divorce bill was agreed last week - and applauded by 27 leaders at a Brussels banquet last night.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is said to have led the audible appreciation after Mrs May finally won a breakthrough talks a week ago.

European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker and European Council president Donald Tusk were expected to give a press conference this morning.

The Prime Minister was in the Belgian capital last night for a final diplomatic love-in before leaders were expected to back her first-round deal today.

Tory Brexit eers already fear the deal went too far with Euro courts overseeing EU citizens' rights for eight years, some possible divergence between Northern Ireland and the UK, and a 'divorce bill' of up to £39million.

Meanwhile Mrs May may be drawing up a compromise to avoid a repeat of this week's first Commons defeat over Brexit.

Tory rebels helped secure a "meaningful vote" by a margin of just four in humiliating scenes the night before she went to Brussels.

Now Downing Street has hinted at a climbdown over a vote to fix the Brexit date in law after Tory rebels threatened a second defeat.

A No10 spokesman insisted there were “no plans to withdraw” the government’s amendment next Wednesday, which sets the date in law at 29 March 2019.

But he refused five times to deny the government could change the wording of its amendment in a bid to appease the rebels.

Instead he said: “We recognise the role of Parliament scrutinising the Bill and we will take a pragmatic approach.”

Asked if a “pragmatic approach” meant changing the wording, he replied: “As I said, we have a pragmatic approach to the Bill.”

Source: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/eu-approves-theresa-brexit-deal-11700035>

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