

EU ‘surprised’ at Boris Johnson’s Brexit stance



Ursula von der Leyen speaking to MEPs

BORIS Johnson’s suggestion that the UK could be prepared to accept an Australian-style relationship with the EU without a formal trade deal has “surprised” Brussels.

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen pointed out that even Australia wants a better trading relationship with the bloc than the one it currently has.

She said the UK and EU should be “way more ambitious”.

In a speech outlining the UK’s negotiating objectives, Mr. Johnson said the question was whether to seek a Canadian-style which eliminates most tariffs and quotas or a looser Australian-style deal.

The British prime minister insisted that “in either case, the UK will prosper”.

But speaking in the European Parliament, Ms von der Leyen said both models fell short of a deal which would meet the goals of allowing trade without tariffs and quotas.

It comes after senior British minister Michael Gove said on Monday that goods coming to Britain from the EU will face import controls from January 1.

He said traders in Britain and the EU will have to submit customs declarations and be liable to goods checks once the Brexit transition period finishes at the end of the year.

The British Retail Consortium said the government would have to move fast to get the infrastructure in place for 2021, warning that without adequate preparations the availability of goods on shelves would be disrupted, with fresh fruit and

vegetables especially vulnerable.

SDLP leader Colum Eastwood said it was “a long way from the promise of frictionless trade and borders of the future”.

“The effect of insisting on trade barriers with the EU is that businesses here that rely on GB market supply for component parts or for access to freight, for example, will face new financial, logistics and supply burdens,” he said.

Source:

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/brexit/2020/02/12/news/eu-surprised-at-boris-johnson-s-brexit-stance-1840117/>

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