

Joe Biden set to urge Boris Johnson to solve post-Brexit Northern Ireland issues at G7



Joe Biden will meet with the Prime Minister at a one-on-one meeting in London on Thursday, before the G7 summit over the weekend (Getty Images)

Joe Biden is set to raise pressure on Boris Johnson to not go back on the post-Brexit Northern Ireland treaty before the pair attend the G7 summit later this week in Cornwall.

Biden will meet with the Prime Minister at a one-on-one meeting in London on Thursday, before the G7 summit over the weekend, with the President expected to signal America's support for the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The Times reports that Biden will say he sees the protocol as a key part of the Good Friday Peace Agreement, which the US acts as a guarantor for, and that a

US-UK trade deal hinges on the protocol working.

It comes as Johnson's UK-EU relations minister Lord David Frost wrote in the Financial Times yesterday that "time is running out" to reach a deal to revise the protocol, after six months of post-Brexit tensions in Northern Ireland.

The protocol sees Northern Ireland follow EU customs union and single market rules, while the rest of the UK does not, resulting in some checks on goods traveling between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The protocol has been met with fury by some parts of the unionist community for creating a so-called border in the Irish sea.

Biden will reportedly also tell Brussels that it needs to stop being so bureaucratic in the implementation of the protocol.

"The administration is now convinced that the protocol has to be made to work and is integral to the peace process," a US diplomatic source told The Times.

Frost is locked in discussions with European Commission vice president Maros Sefcovic over how to apply the Northern Ireland Protocol, after Brussels launched legal action against the UK over its move to postpone border checks.

Full customs checks were supposed to be imposed on things like food, parcels, and medicines going from Great Britain to Northern Ireland from June, however, the UK moved earlier this year to unilaterally postpone these checks until October.

Brussels accused the UK of breaking the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement by doing this and launched legal action.

Frost yesterday accused the EU of being inflexible with the implementation of the protocol and called for Brussels to reduce extra bureaucracy and checks for Northern Ireland businesses where possible.

"In 2019 we agreed, as a huge compromise and for the greater good, to control certain goods movements within our own country and customs territory," he wrote.

"If that situation is not to be totally unsustainable we need to be able to do so in

ways which do not disrupt everyday life and which respect everyone's identity and interests.”

João Vale de Almeida, the EU ambassador to the UK, told Times Radio: “What our British friends asked from us was pragmatism. And we have proven that we want to be pragmatic, but pragmatism requires trust.

“If you don't have trust and if you create frustration then these are not the best conditions to find consensual solutions.”

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