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PRESS RELEASE

Equality and good relations must be a priority as UK exits EU

Following the triggering of Article 50 and the publication of the White Paper on the Great Repeal Bill, the Equality Commission is urging Government to ensure that the promotion of equality and good relations in Northern Ireland is a priority as the UK exits the European Union.

Dr Evelyn Collins CBE said “Equality and good relations are central to ensuring a prosperous and thriving Northern Ireland, it is vital that we ensure that there no regression from the existing equality protections and mechanisms as the UK exits the EU.”

A recent House of Commons Briefing Paper indicates that it is clear that there is some uncertainty in relation to how the Great Repeal Bill, and subsequent UK legislation on the UK’s exit from the EU, will engage with the UK’s devolution framework and highlights that ‘once the constraint of EU law is removed there would be the potential for the laws applying in different parts of the UK to diverge to a greater extent than at present’.

“We must ensure that this does not happen, indeed, Northern Ireland’s equality legislation needs to be strengthened so that people here are afforded at least the same equality protections as those people living in Great Britain under the Equality Act 2010.” Dr Collins concluded.

Note to Editor:

- [Update on equality law considerations](#) (pdf)
- [Law reform: Programme for Government priorities and recommendations](#) (pdf)
- [Gaps in equality law between Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#)