Brexit deal of European Commission and UK's government not good for working people say trade unions



(18 October 2019) As the text of the agreement of the European Union and the UK, for the UK to leave the European Union, has become available, it is clear that this UK Conservative government has no ambition to seek a long-term alignment with EU workers' rights. It is argued that the closer the economic relationship, the closer the level of protection afforded to workers will be. But the Conservative government has repeatedly stated it wants a free trade deal, not membership of the Customs union, nor membership of the Single market. This government wants to compete on the back of workers. UK unions have called therefore upon Members of the UK Parliament to vote against it.

EPSU's General Secretary "There are no benefits for workers in the UK nor EU from this Brexit deal. The economic impact will costs jobs. Workers' rights, environmental

regulations and other protections are now targeted. The UK Conservative government seeks the freedom for pursuing trade policies that expose public services to more liberalization and commercialization. Public service workers and people will suffer. And this affects all in the EU.”

A hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is prevented by the deal for the time being. Mechanisms have been agreed that could change the situation. The implications of the complicated deal need to be considered further. This includes what it means for the customs, tax and border control authorities and the work of the women and men involved. Indications earlier were that the UK authorities were not ready due to lack of staff. The freedom the UK Conservatives have sought to compete on the basis of reduced workers’ rights and weaker environmental regulations might have very direct impacts on the island of Ireland.

EPSU will work with all unions to protect workers’ rights and defend public services. Crucial days lay ahead as the UK and the EU parliament need to vote.

For the text of the revised deal

Reactions available of unions:

For the reaction of the ETUC and its positions on Brexit

The UK’s TUC reaction

The Unison General Secretary reaction

The Irish ICTU response to the deal analyzing it from the perspective of workers on the island of Ireland

For an interesting column of Owen Jones recalling that the UK hardline Brexiteers are seeking the weakening of labour right protections that come with EU membership

U.K.

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