

# Germany and France will tell Irish to ‘move aside’ for EU Brexit deal, says Ian Paisley



Mr Paisley said the EU could sideline the Irish Government to reach a deal with the UK (Brian Lawless/PA)

DUP MP Ian Paisley has said the EU will tell the Irish Government to ‘move aside’ in order to secure a Brexit deal.

The North Antrim representative made the prediction as Theresa May continues her negotiations with the EU to try and secure changes to the withdrawal agreement.

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Speaking on Russia Today, Mr Paisley said the EU could sideline the Irish Government to reach a deal with the UK.

He described the talks process as “wrong-headed”.

“Because it’s been pointed to a political arrangement to suit domestic Irish politics, as opposed to looking at the greater good of a negotiation on trade that would suit everyone in Europe,” he said.

“I think, sooner or later, the German, the French and other member states will say to the Irish ‘you’ve had a good enough run at messing about with your domestic politics, this is now frustrating us getting a deal with the United Kingdom - move aside and let’s get that deal’.”

Mr Paisley claimed investors were pulling out of the EU and European industrialists would be looking to the UK for a trade deal to boost their economy.

“(The EU) are looking at this Brexit deal and saying ‘the only thing we seem to have an argument about is a small, tiny partner, the Irish, who are pushing Europe on a political point-scoring exercise’.”

Last week, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar said anyone hoping that EU solidarity with Ireland will falter on the Brexit border backstop is “in for a nasty surprise”.



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A succinct explanation from Latvia's Foreign Minister @edgarsrinkevics on why



says it'll back Ireland to the hilt despite risk of cliff edge #brexit. It's



about a word holds dear - ‘solidarity’. (It's also, of course, about maintaining the integrity of Single Market)

Earlier this week, Theresa May met with Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, in order to secure legally-binding changes to the controversial Irish backstop.

A joint statement issued following the meeting read: “The two leaders agreed that talks had been constructive and they urged their respective teams to continue to explore the options in a positive spirit.

“They will review progress again in the coming days, seized of the tight timescale and the historic significance of setting the EU and the UK on a path to a deep and unique future partnership.”

Mrs May is eager to get movement on the issue before a series of Brexit votes in the House of Commons on February 27.

The EU, however, has remained adamant the withdrawal agreement will not be reopened, however changes to the Political Declaration, which sets out the future relationship between the UK and EU may be possible.

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