



7th Meeting of the Interparliamentary Forum

Statement

The Interparliamentary Forum (IPF) met for the seventh time on 12 June 2025 at the House of Commons. The meeting was chaired by Simon Hoare MP, Chair of the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee and attended by representatives from the House of Commons, House of Lords, Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish Parliament and Welsh Parliament / Senedd Cymru.

The Forum heard updates from each legislature and discussed issues of common interest including intergovernmental relations, the nature of devolution and the legislative consent process. The Forum noted concerns in relation to the operation of the Internal Market Act and delegates discussed the limitations of the existing funding system for the devolved Governments which, it was noted, is opaque and limited in its capacity to reflect the needs of all parts of the UK.

Concern was expressed about the volume of legislation brought by the UK Government in devolved areas, the challenges faced by devolved parliaments in the effective scrutiny of consent memoranda and the unsatisfactory nature of the legislative process. The Forum considered the slow pace of the process associated with agreeing Common Frameworks and the consequent implications for their implementation. To address the challenges the Forum acknowledged the importance of cooperative working across the parliaments. The Forum agreed to invite ministers from all four Governments to appear together at the next Forum to discuss these issues.

Lord Goldsmith updated the Forum on the work of the House of Lords International Agreements Committee. The Forum discussed the processes established by the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRAG) and the time limitations associated with parliamentary process. The Forum noted difficulties the devolved parliaments face in engaging in scrutiny of international treaties and to properly scrutinise their implications in the devolved parliaments.

Lord Ricketts, Vice-Chair of the UK-EU Parliamentary Partnership Assembly (PPA), updated the Forum on how the PPA has operated since the formation of new delegations in the UK and EU.

Lord Ricketts noted the considerable change in membership of the newly established PPA, and the Forum discussed how the PPA could further enhance its effectiveness. The Forum noted the challenge of incorporating representation from the devolved parliaments.

The Forum met Rt Hon. Douglas Alexander MP, Minister for State in the Cabinet Office and Darren Tierney, Director General, Propriety and Constitution Group in the Cabinet Office and discussed how the UK Government has approached intergovernmental relations since the General Election. The discussion addressed the relationship between the devolved Governments and the UK Government, the UK Government's objectives for its review of the Internal Market Act, the implementation of Common Frameworks and the role of devolved Governments and legislatures in the distribution of funding and international agreements. The discussion with the Minister also addressed opportunities for officials to develop and deepen their experience of the work of other Governments within the UK.

Attendees

Simon Hoare MP, Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, House of Commons

Tonia Antoniazzi MP, Chair, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, House of Commons

Patricia Ferguson MP, Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee, House of Commons

Ruth Jones MP, Chair, Welsh Affairs Committee, House of Commons

Lord (Peter) Goldsmith, Chair, International Agreements Committee, House of Lords

Lord (Peter) Ricketts, Chair, European Affairs Committee, House of Lords

Lord (Thomas) Strathclyde, Chair, Constitution Committee, House of Lords

Paula Bradshaw MLA, Chair, Committee for the Executive Office, Northern Ireland Assembly

Matthew O'Toole MLA, Chair, Committee for Finance, Northern Ireland Assembly

Clare Adamson MSP, Convener, Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee, Scottish Parliament

Alexander Stewart MSP, Deputy Convener, Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee, Scottish Parliament

Alun Davies MS, Member, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, Welsh Parliament / Senedd Cymru

Adam Price MS, Member, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, Welsh Parliament / Senedd Cymru