



*A Stronger United Kingdom in a United Europe*

**#Fightforward!**  
**For A New British Covenant:**  
**"In Britain We TRUST"**

***In the name of God, go.*** Just over eighty years ago, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned in triumph to London from the continent, brandishing a document he claimed assured us of '*peace with honor... in our time*' - after having surrendered our European allies to hyper-nationalism, hate, and Hitler. Winston Churchill wasted no time in admonishing him presciently in no uncertain terms: "*You were given the choice between war and dishonour. You chose dishonour and you will have war.*"

Yesterday, another Tory Prime Minister landed on British soil on her way back from Brussels, brandishing yet again a worthless piece of paper, promising yet again '*peace with honor... in our time*', after having yet again abandoned our European allies to hyper-nationalism, hate, and Putin. Theresa May was given the choice between serving her country and serving her party. She put party before country and faction before party – and in the process did a greater disservice to both the United Kingdom and to the Conservative party than any Prime Minister since Chamberlain in 1938. The so-called '*legally binding agreement*' she returned with is meant to shore up support for today's '*meaningful vote*' on her pending bill regarding the UK's withdrawal from the EU. This bill was already rejected by the House of Commons barely eight weeks ago by 432 votes against to only 202 votes in favour – by far the biggest defeat of a sitting Prime Minister in the modern era.

Theresa May claimed last night upon her arrival in London that she had indeed secured at the very last moment from her EU counterparts the much sought-after assurances regarding both the temporary nature of the Irish backstop included in the withdrawal deal she had previously negotiated with them, and our '*right*' to unilaterally withdraw from the Common Market should we decide that the EU was not negotiating in good faith the terms of our new economic relationship with Europe. However, before her plane even landed, EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker denied in the strongest terms that any such '*legally binding*' changes had been made to the original withdrawal agreement, and that the UK had any such right to '*unilaterally withdraw*' at any time it saw fit from the Common Market before reaching mutually agreeable terms with the EU.

In her desperate attempts to prevent being kicked unceremoniously out of 10 Downing Street, Theresa May has faithfully followed in Chamberlain's footsteps and has unforgivably misled us all not only about the tenor of this latest charade '*agreement*', but also about the nature and results of the entire Brexit process she has

STRONGER UNITED

PHONE

EMAIL

WEB

1A Empire Buildings, Crayford, Dartford, UK DA1 4JJ

(44) 747-0270435

[alex@strongerunited.info](mailto:alex@strongerunited.info)

<http://www.strongerunited.info>



been relentlessly and blindly driving forward for almost three years now. She cannot claim not to have been warned in the clearest terms about the dire consequences of her actions from the very beginning. None other than General Sir Nick Carter, at the time Chief of Staff of the UK's Armed Forces, stated only five days after the June 23, 2016 Brexit vote that

*"[t]he existential threat to the UK is probably not from the Islamic extremism nor is it from imminent invasion; rather it is the incremental erosion of the rules-based global architecture that has assured our freedom, prosperity, and enviably open way of life since 1945."*

No British politician has done more in modern times to denigrate, destabilise, degrade, and destroy this rules-based global architecture – in utter and wanton disregard of her own Chief of Staff's advice and warning - than our current Prime Minister. Today, the members of the House of Commons must do their solemn duty to the citizens who elected them, to the country they were entrusted to govern, and to the continent they belong to by fate and by choice, by rejecting yet again Theresa May's unconscionable withdrawal agreement, by taking in their own hands the future of the entire Brexit process, and by giving us, the voters, a voice and a vote in its ultimate outcome. There surely must exist one senior Tory politician with the courage, with the integrity, with the sense of duty displayed by Leo Amery in 1940, when he valiantly stood up in the House of Commons and almost singlehandedly forced Neville Chamberlain's resignation with one of the most memorable speeches ever heard within those venerable Westminster walls:

*"We cannot go on as we are. There must be a change. First and foremost, it must be a change in the system and structure of our governmental machine... [W]e cannot go on being led as we are. I have quoted certain words of Oliver Cromwell. I will quote certain other words... which, I think, are applicable to the present situation. This is what Cromwell said to the Long Parliament when he thought it was no longer fit to conduct the affairs of the nation: You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go."*

**'In Britain We TRUST'.** We at *Stronger United* want Great Britain to truly renew itself and become a modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century democracy, governed in a different, innovative way by 'a government of its citizens, by its citizens, for its citizens, with its citizens'. For that to happen, we must break the vicious spiral of today's Brexit nightmare and give ourselves the chance to decide together our future heading: *Remain and Transform* or *Leave and Retrench*. To that effect, we set out five main demands, to be implemented over the next twenty-two months:

- **Extend** Art. 50 of the Treaty of the EU by 21 months - before 29. March 2019;
- **Participate** in European Parliament elections at the end of May 2019;
- **Call** for a Citizens' Constitutional Convention between June 2019 and May 2020;
- **Organise** a binding People's Vote on a 'New British Covenant' in June 2020; and
- **Translate** into law the People's Vote result by end of December 2020.

*Stronger United (SU)* is a grassroots movement that was born in 2015, soon after Tory electoral victory of that year, as it became clear that a Brexit Referendum would indeed take place. *SU* registered with the UK Electoral Commission as a permitted participant in the 2016 Brexit Referendum, and campaigned for the UK to remain a



member of the EU. *SU* was critical of both Leave and Remain campaigns and adopted even then the position of Remaining in the EU so as to assist in Transforming it, as explained in our April 2016 book entitled Stronger United: How to Win the Brexit Battle and What to Do the Day After. We are now continuing the fight to ensure that a People's Vote will give all our fellow citizens the option to build a new system of governance for our country in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, at all levels of government: local, regional, British, European, Transatlantic, as explained in our latest book, Britain Beyond Brexit, Charing a Clear Course, published in February 2019.

We strongly believe that our future can only be European and Transatlantic. To echo Sir Nick Carter's admonition of three years ago, a Britain unmoored from both the Old Continent and the New is a Britain adrift, a Britain without allies, a Britain without friends, a Britain without a future. We, in Great Britain, have always been the critical linchpin holding together the two great wings of the Transatlantic Community – NATO and the European Union. By leaving the EU we also gamble with the actual unity of the UK and thus severely weaken NATO and endanger the very future of the Transatlantic Community, at a time when US President Trump already seems quite eager to weaken these ties of friendship, cooperation, and mutual interest that have bound us all together until now. It is therefore our solemn duty to remain in the EU – but to remain in order to transform it into a more democratic, more accountable, more effective, and more citizen-oriented level of governance than it is today.

This is why the motto of the new campaign we launch today is "*In Britain We **TRUST: Transform and Remain – United Stronger Tomorrow***". Trust is the glue that binds us together as a community of communities, a civil society, a country. Trust is what enables us to elect MPs whose duty is to re-present us in Parliament. Yet today, that very trust between voters and politicians has all but disappeared. We must again find that trust – in our country, in our political system, in ourselves. '*In Britain We TRUST*' is therefore more than a campaign slogan – it is a profession of faith in who we are, what we stand for, and in the future of Great Britain itself.

**A New British Covenant.** First and foremost, it is high time for our elected officials to recognise what has been obvious to most of us for many years now: that – in the words of *openDemocracy*'s editor Adam Ramsay – "*Brexit is only one aspect of a much deeper constitutional crisis which ultimately requires a constitutional convention to decide how this country should be governed.*" The Citizens' Constitutional Convention we call for must therefore address the five great challenges of our times we must all face together:

- **A Strong United Kingdom:** *How do we both celebrate the UK's cultural diversity and at the same time ensure that this works to reinforce the UK's own identity and pride in its past, present, and future?* Decision-making institutions must be as close as possible to citizens not only when we discuss the powers of the EU, but also just as importantly when we examine those of Westminster or even Edinburgh and Cardiff. In the Connectivity Era, we must build flatter, more flexible, more responsive networks of governance within Britain itself, that will strengthen its legitimacy and cohesion in the eyes of all its citizens, irrespective of social status, ethno-cultural identity, or geographical location. All individuals deserve to be respected as possessing equal dignity and worth and be given equal opportunities to succeed; all communities must benefit from both social justice and cultural



recognition. We can all be proud to be British if we know that we and our various communities and localities are respected, supported, and empowered by our political institutions.

- **A United Europe:** *How do we create a fair, dynamic, creative Europe, where all citizens can benefit from equal opportunities and are conscious of sharing similar responsibilities for their future and that of their families, friends, and neighbours?* The Preamble to the 1957 Treaty of Rome states its signatory members' desire "...to lay the foundations of an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe". This is complemented by the Treaty on European Union, emphasizing the wish "...to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions" and "...to enhance further the democratic and efficient functioning of the institutions so as to enable them better to carry out, within a single institutional framework, the tasks entrusted to them". To do so we must make the EU more democratic, more accountable, more flexible, more legitimate and above all, closer and more responsive to the needs of all its citizens. An effective and responsible EU Parliament and true, pan-European political parties represent the keys to unblocking the currently gridlocked process of institutional renewal.
- **A New Trans-Atlantic Partnership:** *How do we address in an effective, accountable and legitimate manner major economic and political crises such as the 2008 Global Financial Collapse, the Ukrainian conflict, and terrorist threats and migration crises connecting our cities with civil wars in the Middle East?* The special relationship between the USA and the UK is founded in large measure on the special role the UK plays within the EU, NATO, the UN, and other regional and global institutions. Leaving the EU would damage not only our standing around the world, but also our historic partnership with its North American cousins across the Atlantic Ocean. Once the Transatlantic free trade agreements between the EU, USA, and Canada are signed, we must move from a state-centred, military security focused NATO 1.0 to a democratically centred, human security focused NATO 2.0 that together with NAFTA (still in place although 'rebranded' by the Trump Administration) and the EU, could well constitute the critical core of a legitimate, accountable, and effective global system of multi-level governance.
- **Active Citizen Participation:** *Real democracy is more than casting one vote every five years and then letting our self-serving, often corrupt elected officials take whatever decisions suit their interests best - in our name. How do we ensure that we have the power to do so?* Governments 'of the people, by the people, for the people, with the people' must not be allowed to wither away and disappear under the institutional weight of bureaucracy, inertia, corruption, cronyism, self-interest and self-perpetuation. Zombie institutions that no longer serve any purpose but refuse to die because they line up the nest eggs of political and corporate élites at the expense of the citizens who finance and support them must be swept away and new ones, better fit to resolve the modern challenges we all face, must be put in place. Bringing about this revolutionary paradigm shift in a peaceful, democratic manner, in the UK, across the EU, and throughout the Transatlantic Community is the most important task we must take on in the years ahead.
- **Effective and Responsible Governments:** *How do we re-form our old and no longer responsive institutions of government still dominated by an élite group of cronies, into a modern, flexible, adaptable, and democratic system of governance where each and every one can play a part and make*



*a difference?* Mahatma Gandhi's principle of satyagraha – soul power, translates into the modern principle of “autonomous accountability” of individuals willing to take responsibility for their own and their communities' futures, and ready to get involved in making the choices, taking the decisions, and implementing the solutions needed to address the challenges we all face at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is the cornerstone of the *Stronger United* Campaign and of the very concept of multi-level governance; for without active citizens willing to participate in deciding the future course of their own lives, there can be no functioning, effective, legitimate and accountable institutions. Therefore, our aim is to achieve an 85 per cent participation rate at the new 'People's Vote' that will send a clear message to the British and European civil societies: “Yes to a Citizens' Europe – No to a EU run by national politicians, for national politicians, with national politicians!”

**Our '4D' Tactics: *Directly deliberative democratic decision-making processes.*** Due to its importance to the future of the country, it is essential that a People's Vote be seen to be democratically legitimate and truly empowering by all British voters, both procedurally and substantially. This means that it will have to address not only whether we wish to remain in or leave the EU, but just as importantly, how we can now chart a clear way forward on how this country should be governed as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century democracy moving towards a different kind of future. Therefore, it cannot simply consist in being just a repeat of the June 2016 Brexit vote, nor can it be done in haste, without adequate popular debates, discussions, and consultations. Before holding such a vote, it must be established without doubt that we, citizens of Great Britain, do indeed demand to make our voices heard anew in such a People's Vote on our future in Europe. Therefore, in order to have the time to do so, we must extend Art. 50 TEU by 21 months.

As recently suggested by Jane Morrice, former deputy Speaker of the Northern Ireland Stormont Assembly, the upcoming May 2019 European Parliament elections provide us with exactly such an opportunity to legitimise democratically the upcoming People's Vote. A cross-sectional pro-EU candidates' list must be put to the voters, together with a clear program outlining what such a People's Vote will entail, and how it will be managed. The election of a majority of British MEPs from this list to the European Parliament would thus provide unquestionable evidence of the British electorate's firm will to engage in such a process, culminating in a People's Vote. A victory of a majority of pro-EU MEPs explicitly running on a platform advocating this People's Vote and spelling out both the substance and the procedure of such a future consultation, would constitute a new and powerful popular mandate and would more than overcome the Brexiteers' argument that, in holding 'a second Brexit vote', the democratically-expressed view of Britons in the June 2016 would be thwarted, disrespected, ignored.

Following the European Parliament elections, a cross-party-led House of Commons must show leadership and vision by legislating to organise and participate in the public deliberations of a one-year long Citizens' Constitutional Convention, which would be followed by the actual People's Vote – as the culmination and validation of our civic exercise of discussion, deliberation, and decision-making, and not as a negation of our right to do so, as clearly happened with the 216 Brexit Referendum. This process must be defined by four key requirements:



- setting out from the start fair, legitimate, and effective rules on how the Citizens' Constitutional Convention would be selected and conducted;
- enabling an open, participative, deliberative process bringing together all voices that demand to be heard in today's Britain and are determined to contribute in shaping our common future together, in the UK, in Europe, as members of the Transatlantic community, based on the three fundamental principles of absolute inclusion, deep diversity and the power of the best argument;
- allowing for sufficient time for an iterative process of creative envisioning, feedback, and decision-making to emerge from the ground up, from all citizens towards the Convention, and not from the top down, as a 'royal directive' from Westminster's entrenched élite to its 'British subjects'; and finally,
- deciding on a simple, clear, direct question giving all British citizens, wherever they might live, the opportunity to make their voice heard and have their votes counted in a final People's Vote.

In order to meet these requirements, the Citizens' Constitutional Convention should be composed of seven phases, as follows:

- **Phase 1:** Each of England's nine regions, together with Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland select a 24-member Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) to determine how each of these 12 constituencies will select a Regional Constitutional Assembly (RCA), how these will conduct their proceedings, and what issues they will address in their deliberations. Two members from each RAC shall be then selected as members of a United Kingdom Advisory Committee that will oversee the country's Citizens' Constitutional Council (CCC). This phase would last two weeks.
- **Phase 2:** The Regional Constitutional Assemblies, each composed of 1,200 citizens drawn from all walks of life so as to represent their specific constituencies as closely as possible, will start out by holding public hearings for four weeks, then deliberate for three weeks, and finally draft their Recommendations to the CCC over a two-week period. One hundred members from each RCA will then be selected as members of the country's CCC. This phase would last a total of nine weeks.
- **Phase 3:** The 1,200 members of the Citizens' Constitutional Council (100 from each RCA) will also begin its proceedings by holding public hearings for four weeks across the country, then deliberate for three weeks based on those hearings and on the Recommendations received from the 12 RCAs, and finally draft in two weeks an UK Interim Report (UKIR) setting out clearly "*how this country should be governed*" as a "*21<sup>st</sup> century democracy*" – including, but certainly not limited to, the UK's relationship with the EU. This phase would also last a total of nine weeks.
- **Phase 4:** The CCC sends its UK Interim report to each of the 12 RCAs and proceeds to hold public hearings across the country on the content of the UKIR for nine weeks; meanwhile, the RCAs, after receiving the text of the UKIR, would deliberate on its contents for seven weeks, and go on to draft their final Recommendations to the CCC over a two-week period. Phase 4 would thus unfold over a nine-week period.
- **Phase 5:** The Citizens' Constitutional Convention would deliberate for five weeks based on its Interim Report, on the feedback to it received during its latest public hearings, and on the final Recommendations handed to it by each of the 12 Regional Constitutional Assemblies. The CCC would





then take four weeks to draft its UK Final Report (UKFR) detailing its analysis of how this country should be governed as a 21<sup>st</sup> century democracy, and including an actionable set of clear, coherent, comprehensive, and concise Recommendations on how to implement the necessary constitutional changes to enable this *'different kind of future'* at the local, regional, British, European, and Transatlantic levels of governance.

- **Phase 6:** A fourteen-week long democratic deliberation process will be held across the country to discuss, debate, and decide whether or not to approve, ratify, and implement the CCC's Final Report and Recommendations.
- **Phase 7:** A People's Vote, held over two days to ensure all citizens who wish to do so will have the opportunity to make their voices heard and have their ballots counted, will finally determine whether the UK will adopt or reject the CCC's Recommendations, including but not limited to our future relationship with the EU. The question to be put to vote must therefore be simple and direct: *"Do you approve or reject the adoption and implementation of the Civic Constitutional Convention's Recommendations?"*

Finally, the Citizens' Constitutional Convention must conduct its deliberations and reach its recommendations whilst fully taking into account the **"TEN REPAIRS"** we must urgently undertake in Britain, across Europe, and throughout the Transatlantic Community:

- **Trustworthy banking system:** the lifeblood of our economic prosperity;
- **Effective peacekeeping:** human security for Britain, Europe, the world
- **National recognition:** celebration of our nations and cultures;
- **Resilient sustainability:** environmental, social, economic, cultural balance;
- **Empowered eco-regions:** regions as new platforms of economic growth;
- **ParticipActive citizenship:** giving us a voice & vote in shaping our future;
- **Accountable government:** new transparent institutions of governance;
- **Info-media access and security:** Accessing online data & protecting privacy;
- **Revitalised 'glocal' cities:** connecting local communities & global networks; and
- **Safe and secure communities:** safe homes & communities in UK & abroad.

***Our European Parliament Elections Manifesto.*** To achieve these aims, goals, and objectives *Stronger United* calls here and now for the emergence of an innovative, new coalition of all existing British parties that support *'Remain and Transform'* across the political spectrum:

- The Labour Party;
- The Liberal Democratic Party;
- The Green Party;
- Plaid Cymru (Wales);
- The Scottish National Party (Scotland);
- The Social Democratic and Liberal Party (Northern Ireland);
- The Independent Group (including Tory and Labour MPs).



Each party needs to be represented in the UK delegation to the European Parliament so as to bring innovative ideas and represent all home nations as part of an on-going, deliberative process based on the fundamental principles of absolute inclusion, deep diversity, and the power of the best argument. Since each voice counts, the detailed text of the new *Stronger United* Coalition's European Parliament Election Manifesto will be worked out by all parties together, so that all their perspectives will be represented in their areas of expertise and interest pertaining to the EU level of governance whilst at the same time setting out a coherent and comprehensive vision for our common future in the Connexity Era. To do so, this Manifesto will be structured around an Eight-Point *Citizens' Plan for Change* for the May 2019 European elections:

- *WE Have the Power - ParticipActive Citizenship*: directly deliberative democratic practices at all levels of government work together with representative institutions using new technologies of communication.
- *'Yes' to EU – 'No' to Eurocrats*: a pan-European public and political sphere: governance of European citizens, for European citizens, by European citizens, with European citizens.
- *The New 'Magna Carta'*: a new EU Citizens' Constitutional Covenant specifying how the various political levels and juridical institutions of the EU work together in a cooperative, dynamic, mutually supportive manner;
- *Peoples' Governments*: All levels of government must abide by core principles of Openness, Accountability, Transparency, Responsibility, Integrity, Honesty, and Professionalism.
- *Safe Communities for All*: human security across the full spectrum environment of threats, both real and virtual, of the EU and of its neighbours.
- *NATO 2.0*: from a military Transatlantic alliance with a democratic component to a democratic Transatlantic Community with a military component.
- *Responsible EU Parliament*: EU Parliament effectively appoints all Commission members as well as 'Troika' of EU Council President, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security, and President of the European Central Bank, and becomes the driving institution of EU level of governance, working cooperatively with a reformed EU Council. New term limits, code of ethics, pan-European parties rules.
- *Fair and prosperous Europe*: a solidary, innovative, creative, caring, competitive, compassionate EU that works for all its citizens, communities, regions, and nations.

Given the regional nature of voting in the EP elections, we propose to adopt a regional strategy: each of the six smaller parties will run unopposed by any other *SU* coalition member in its 'home region' or in the region it can expect to get the best results, and that Labour run unopposed in the six English regions north of London:

- Labour: North East, North West, Yorkshire & Humberside, East Midlands, West Midlands, East
- Liberal Democrats: South East
- Greens: South West
- Plaid Cymru: Wales
- SNP: Scotland
- The Independent Group: London
- SDLP: Northern Ireland





***Britain trusts that we all do our duty.*** Today, on this historic day of March 12, 2019, as we prepare to witness one of the most important parliamentary debates and votes of our lifetimes, we must not forget for an instant that in order to remain true to our claim that *In Britain We TRUST*, we all must *#Fightforward*, towards the world of tomorrow, not slide backwards towards times long gone by. Our young people in particular have the most to gain by remaining full-fledged EU citizens, and having their horizons unbound from hard state borders, declining standards of education, lack of employment opportunities. It is therefore only fair that the future of our campaign to *Remain and Transform* the European Union rests largely in their hands - in their ability to organise this movement, to participate in its actions and, as they advance boldly towards the Connexity Era of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, to make their voices heard loud and clear that all our tomorrows must perform be simultaneously British, European, and Transatlantic. Most importantly, we all, young and older alike, owe it to ourselves, to our children, to all our loved ones to come out in massive numbers with enthusiasm and determination to fulfil our civic duty in the upcoming People's Vote - by casting our ballots and having them count in this momentous decision we will be called to make in the very near future.

By **C. Alexander Olteanu**

Founder and President, *Stronger United*

Website: [www.strongerunited.info](http://www.strongerunited.info)

Email: [alex@strongerunited.info](mailto:alex@strongerunited.info)

Tel: 0747-027-0435