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22 February 2014

Dear Gavin,

Thank you for your email dated 29 January 2014.

As I indicated in my previous letter to the European and External Relations Committee on 26 January 2014, the arrangements for the ratification of the EU Treaty amendment required to give legal effect to Scotland's independent EU membership are the prerogative of individual Member States. The date by which ratification in all Member States should be achieved, and the ratification instrument deposited in Rome, will be agreed by the Council and will be indicated in the amending instrument. The Scottish Government has no reason to believe this process cannot be achieved within the 18-month period between September 2014 and March 2016.

On the matter of membership of the Eurozone, the Scottish Government has made clear it will retain sterling as the currency of an independent Scotland. Accordingly it will not be in any position to meet the prerequisites for membership of the Eurozone. I have enclosed some further quotes from experts to reinforce this point.

NICOLA STURGEON

Annex 1

The Euro

Dr. Fabian Zuleeg, Chief Economist, European Policy Centre, oral evidence at the European External Relations Committee (20/02/14)

"It is clear that, in the current framework of the European Union, no country can be forced into the eurozone."

Prof Jim Gallagher, former UK Government adviser on Devolution and current adviser to the Better Together campaign (10/04/13) Edinburgh University Blog

"So, for example, it seems pretty likely that Scotland would be an EU member state, probably after an accelerated set of accession negotiations. Precisely what the conditions of membership would be is not quite so clear, though immediate requirements to join the Euro or the Schengen agreement can surely be avoided."

Dr. Daniel Kenealy, School of Social and Political Science (13/12/2012), Scotsman (letter):

"The euro is a genuine example of scaremongering within this debate. The notion that Scotland could be compelled to join the Euro is simply untrue."

General Currency Lines

Dr Jim Walker, chief economist at Asianomics (Source: Sunday Times 29 December 2013) described the proposition to enter into a formal currency union with rUK as:

"a suggestion made in the interests of friendship, continuity and mutual benefit."

....and also commented that *"a formal currency union would suit both partners best"*.