# Government decision to scrap European Scrutiny Committee draws criticism amidst Brexit negotiations



**Government Decision to Scrap European Scrutiny Committee Draws Criticism Amidst Brexit Negotiations**

In a move that raises serious questions about transparency and accountability, the UK Government has decided to abolish the Commons European Scrutiny Committee. This decision has drawn significant criticism, feeding suspicions that Prime Minister Keir Starmer is attempting to obscure details regarding his ongoing Brexit negotiations with Brussels, following his recent pledge to reset relations with the EU.

The European Scrutiny Committee, originally set up to oversee the political and legal significance of EU documents and directives submitted to the UK Parliament, is now set for dissolution. The Government’s rationale behind this decision—that its primary function has become obsolete post-Brexit—has failed to convince many.

Immediately, this plan faced backlash from prominent figures, decrying the Government’s lack of commitment to transparency. Sir Bill Cash, former chairman of the committee, slammed the decision as "dangerous and undemocratic," claiming it would create a 'black hole' in scrutinising new Brexit arrangements. He emphasized the insufficient capability of other parliamentary committees to adequately monitor these pivotal negotiations, given their limited time and expertise.

Opposition MPs have echoed these concerns. Richard Tice, deputy leader of an opposition party, urged a reconsideration of the committee's abolition, warning that ongoing and future negotiations with the EU will necessitate a specialized body for effective scrutiny. Tice cited the Government's Brexit mantra of "taking back control" over borders, money, and laws, arguing that robust parliamentary oversight is essential to honor this promise.

Moreover, Labour MP Stella Creasy expressed apprehension about creating a 'lacuna' in Brexit oversight, where crucial debates on trade and regulatory implications could proceed without sufficient parliamentary monitoring. She insisted that any reset in UK-EU relations must come with detailed oversight, which the dissolution of this committee would severely undermine.

In an attempt to justify the decision, Lucy Powell, the Leader of the House of Commons, stated that the committee's role was inherently connected to the UK's EU membership and that such a function has become redundant post-Brexit. She reassured that European issues would still be scrutinized via other parliamentary committees, including the foreign affairs committee.

Despite these assurances, the Prime Minister’s official spokesman reiterated that scrutiny would continue through various committees and regular Cabinet Office oral questions. However, the move has already caused substantial controversy, underscoring the political sensitivity and complexity surrounding the management of post-Brexit relations with the EU.

This controversial decision highlights a significant point of contention in the ongoing efforts to redefine the UK’s relationship with European allies. It reflects the deep challenges and potential pitfalls of navigating post-Brexit dynamics, throwing into question the Government’s commitment to transparency and accountability in a period demanding heightened scrutiny.