

30 January 2017

Thank you for contacting me about the Article 50 judgment and the vote in Parliament.

The Supreme Court has decided that an Act of Parliament is required to invoke Article 50. Although I had argued that the Government had the power to begin the withdrawal process on its own, I fully accept the Court's decision and the Government will abide by the Court's judgment in full.

Parliament will now vote on a bill to invoke Article 50 and I will vote in favour of the Bill. I believe that it would be democratically impossible to ignore the wishes of the electorate. A majority voted in June last year to leave the EU. More people voted in the referendum than at any general election since 1992. No Prime Minister or Government in British history has ever received as large a mandate. Parliament also voted by a majority of 373 to invoke Article 50 by March this year.

It is clear that a significant factor in the vote to leave was a desire for the UK to regain its sovereignty. This means being able to control the numbers of people coming to this country from Europe and leaving the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice. This can only be achieved by leaving the single market. Being out of the EU but still a member of the single market would mean complying with the EU's rules and regulations without having a vote on what those rules and regulations are.

I hope that this explains my decision and thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Alok Sharma MP