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Answer given by President Juncker
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.12.2018)

The Commission as Union negotiator is working hard to reach an agreement on an orderly withdrawal of the United Kingdom. Completing the negotiations on the withdrawal agreement and agreeing the political declaration remains the Commission's goal.

As the question indicates, these are complex and novel issues and there was no pre-existing terminology for the different types of end arrangements. The Commission has, however, been clear that the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union will entail serious disruption in any scenario. The Commission has made clear that all stakeholders and national and EU administrations need to prepare for a scenario in which there would not be a withdrawal agreement by the date of the United Kingdom's withdrawal. In its Communication of 19 July 2018 on Brexit preparedness¹, the Commission defined the notion 'preparedness measures', namely that these are measures that will have to be taken as a consequence of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom, regardless of whether there will be a withdrawal agreement with the United Kingdom or not. To assist in the preparations, the Commission has published detailed, sectorial information notices to stakeholders.

'Contingency measures', on the other hand, are the measures that would be necessary to mitigate the effects of a withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union without a Withdrawal Agreement. These measures should not replicate the benefits of membership of the Union, nor the terms of any transition period. Moreover, these measures will in general be temporary in nature, and should not go beyond the end of 2019.

Contingency measures would involve some actions at EU level while others would fall within the responsibility of Member States, depending on the area of competence.

¹ COM(2018) 556 final/2.