

# WHAT IS ARTICLE 50?

It consists of just five short, vaguely worded paragraphs, but Article 50 of the European Union's 2007 Lisbon Treaty will decide how Britain leaves -- and it is already causing problems. The short section buried in the laws that govern the EU has never been used and was written at a time when the prospect of any member state leaving seemed very unlikely.

The key opening phrase -- "Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements" -- was indeed the first time EU law laid out an exit plan.

But now it is at the centre of an acrimonious row between London and its soon-to-be former partners about how and when Britain will leave after Thursday's vote to quit.

Article 50 says this: "A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council (the 28 leaders of the EU member states, led by EU President Donald Tusk) of its intention."

But it does not say when this must happen, and that has become the first crucial stumbling block. Prime Minister David Cameron said he would resign by October, leaving his successor to begin the talks. But his EU peers believe notification should be "as soon as possible". What is clear from Article 50 is, however, that it is only the member state concerned which can make the notification. It cannot be forced on Britain by Brussels.

Under Article 50, Britain's notification will set the clock ticking on a two-year period of negotiations within which a basic withdrawal agreement should be made. After that "the treaties shall cease to apply to the state in question" -- or in layman's terms, Brexit is a reality.

The talks can in theory be extended if need be -- but only by the unanimous consent of Britain and the other 27 member states. The alternative is a chaotic British exit on the stroke of two years, with lots of loose ends.

Britain and the EU will separately need to negotiate what Article 50 calls their "future relationship". This is not spelled out but would include issues such as access to the single market, whether Britain will have trade deals with the EU, whether free movement will continue, and so on.

Article 50 does say that a former EU nation can seek to rejoin after leaving -- under Article 49 of the Lisbon Treaty. This however begins the membership process from zero, in the same way as current candidate states like Turkey, Serbia and Albania.

SOURCE: AFP



People walk over Westminster Bridge wrapped in Union flags, towards the Queen Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) and The Houses of Parliament in central London, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP



## Kerry heads to London after Brexit

AFP, Rome

US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday expressed regret that Britain has chosen to leave the European Union and vowed Washington will maintain close ties with the bloc.

Kerry, who flies to Brussels and London today for crisis talks with EU and British leaders, said the ideal of unity must remain paramount as Britain negotiates "Brexit".

"An EU united and strong is our preference for a partner to be able to work on the important issues that face us today," Kerry told reporters during a visit to Rome.

"One country has made a decision, obviously it's a decision that the United States had hoped would go the other way," he said.

Washington was dismayed last week when British voters chose to leave Europe, a decision that triggered global economic uncertainty and fears other EU members will follow suit.

But Kerry said he had no doubt that Europe would pull together and reassure the markets, noting that even without Britain the EU single market counts 455 million consumers.

Kerry arrived in Rome yesterday on a planned visit to have lunch with Gentiloni and a working dinner with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

But officials on his flight said that today he would fly on to EU headquarters in Brussels to meet EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini. From Brussels Kerry will continue to London to see Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond.

Hammond and Kerry are expected to hold a joint news conference before Kerry leaves to return to Washington.

# "No need to write, David"

### EU urges Britain to begin exit move tomorrow as Germany courts for time

AGENCIES

Britain need not send a formal letter to the European Union to trigger a two-year countdown to its exit from the bloc, EU officials said, implying British Prime Minister David Cameron could start the process when he speaks at a summit tomorrow.

"Triggering" ... could either be a letter to the president of the European Council or an official statement at a meeting of the European Council duly noted in the official records of the meeting," a spokesman for the council of EU leaders said.

A second EU official, asked about mounting frustration among leaders with the British prime minister's delay in delivering the formal notification required to launch divorce proceedings, said: "It doesn't have to be written. He can just say it."

Meanwhile, the European Parliament's chief yesterday called for Britain to begin proceedings to leave the EU at a summit this week, as Germany suggested the country should be given time to "reconsider".

Amid confusion and dissent over the timetable for any "Brexit", Martin Schulz told German newspaper Bild am Sonntag that a period of limbo would "lead to even more insecurity and thus endanger jobs".

"Hesitating simply to accommodate the party tactics of the British Conservatives hurts everyone," Schulz, a German Social Democrat, said.

"That is why we expect the British government to now deliver. The summit on Tuesday is the right time."

However German Chancellor Angela Merkel's chief of

staff insisted there was no rush to show Britain the door.

"The political leadership in London should have the chance to reconsider once again the consequences of a withdrawal," Peter Altmaier told the RND media group.

Altmaier had earlier told German public radio that he had "no indication" that British Prime Minister David Cameron would start the Brexit process tomorrow.

"I tend to think that the application will be filed in the coming weeks or months, possibly only by a new government," he said.

The EU will hold a 2-day summit in Brussels starting from tomorrow to discuss the fallout from the British vote and the European Parliament will also hold a special session.

However the four biggest groups in the European Parliament have also drawn up a draft resolution calling for Cameron to set the Brexit ball rolling tomorrow, Germany's Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung reported.

This was crucial, the groups wrote, "to avoid damaging uncertainty for all and to preserve the integrity of the union".

Cameron said Friday in the wake of the shock referendum outcome favouring Britain leaving the EU that he would resign his office by October and leave the Brexit negotiations to his successor.

To begin the withdrawal process, Britain must invoke Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon treaty, which has never been used before.

The first step is to inform the European Council of member states, which sets the clock ticking on a two-year timetable of negotiations.



## BID FOR SECOND EU REFERENDUM

# Fraud probe as petition gathers 3m signatures

BBC ONLINE

The House of Commons petitions committee has said it is investigating allegations of fraud in connection with a petition calling for a second EU referendum.

Any signatures found to be fraudulent would be removed, it said.

More than 3.1 million people have signed the petition, although PM David Cameron has previously said there will be no second referendum.

It comes after the UK voted 52-48 to leave the EU in Thursday's referendum.

Helen Jones, who chairs the cross-party petitions committee, said in a statement posted on Twitter that it was taking the allegations of fraud "very seriously".

"People adding fraudulent signatures to this petition should know that they undermine the cause they pretend to support," she said.

The committee will consider the petition

at its meeting next week and decide whether to schedule a debate on it, Jones said.

A House of Commons spokeswoman said the petition was created on 24 May. There were 22 signatures on it at the time the referendum result was announced.

The petition's website states it was set up by an individual called William Oliver Healey, and says: "We the undersigned call upon HM Government to implement a rule that if the Remain or Leave vote is less than 60%, based on a turnout less than 75%, there should be another referendum."

Thursday saw a 72.2% turnout, significantly higher than the 66.1% turnout at last year's general election, but below the 75% mark suggested by Healey as a threshold.

BBC political correspondent Iain Watson says the petition has attracted a lot of attention but has zero chance of being enacted, because it is asking for retrospective legislation.



# Fallujah 'retaken'

### Claims Iraq; Russian, regime raids kill 82 in east Syria

AFP, Fallujah

The commander of Iraqi forces that retook Fallujah from the Islamic State group said yesterday the operation had been carried out with limited damage to the city.

"The percentage of destruction in Fallujah is no more than 10 percent and is spread across all neighbourhoods of the city," Lieutenant General Abdelwahab al-Saadi told AFP.

Saadi and other commanders yesterday announced that Fallujah had been brought under full control of the security forces after they retook IS's last positions in the Jolan neighbourhood.

The recapture of Fallujah, bar a few remaining pockets of IS fighters, brings to a close a broad offensive launched more than a month ago on one of the jihadists' most emblematic bastions.

"This battle was the cleanest urban battle in the whole of Iraq," Saadi told Iraqiya state television.

The US-led coalition offered some aerial assistance during the Fallujah operation but was less involved than six months ago during the

offensive to retake Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province in which Fallujah is also located.

Meanwhile, at least 82 people including 58 civilians were killed in Russian and regime air strikes on an Islamic State group-held area of eastern Syria yesterday.

"Three Russian and Syrian regime air raids on the region of Al-Quriyah, south-east of Deir Ezzor city, killed 58 civilians," the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

It added that 24 other people were killed, without specifying whether they were civilians or IS fighters. The Britain-based Observatory initially reported that 47 people including 31 civilians died in the raids around Al-Quriyah.

Russian warplanes have been carrying out an air war in support of President Bashar al-Assad since September 2015.

IS holds around 60 percent of Deir Ezzor city, the capital of the province of the same name, which is next to the jihadist-held Raqa province.

## WAR ON ISLAMIC STATE



An Afghan National Army soldier fires an artillery shell during ongoing clashes between Afghan security forces and suspected IS militants in Kot District in eastern Nangarhar province yesterday. The interior ministry in a statement said at least 18 militants had been killed and more than 40 others wounded in the clashes. PHOTO: AFP

# Indo-Nepal border pillars to have GPS

PTI, Kathmandu

More than 8,000 pillars along the India-Nepal border will be linked to a Global Navigation Satellite System, allowing authorities for the first time to effectively manage the over 1,700-km-long porous boundary.

Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the Nepal-India Boundary Global Navigation Satellite System (NIB GNSS) will be used for the boundary pillars.

The decision in this regard was made at the third meeting of Nepal-India Boundary Working Group (BWG) which concluded here on Saturday, a statement from the ministry said.

Krishna Raj BC, Director General of the Survey Department, led the Nepali delegation during the three-day meeting while the Indian delegation was led by Swarna Subba Rao, Surveyor General of India.

"The BWG meeting reviewed reports submitted before it by the SOC (Survey Officials' Committee) and Joint Field Survey Teams (FST), and appreciated the progress made on the ongoing boundary work carried out at Nepal-India border," it said.

"Both the delegations reaffirmed the importance of effective boundary management. In this context, they emphasised the importance of making local authorities and people living along the border aware of the field works being conducted by joint field teams," it said.

# 'Mentality of Crusades'

### Turkey, Pope in row over Armenian genocide

AFP, Khor Virap

Pope Francis yesterday released peace doves on the Armenia-Turkey border in a gesture of reconciliation as Ankara slammed the pontiff for denouncing the mass killings of Armenians by Ottoman forces as "genocide".

Standing on a terrace of the Khor Virap monastery, Francis and the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church Karekin II released the two white birds in the direction of Mount Ararat -- the Biblical final resting place of Noah's Ark -- now in modern-day Turkey.

The long-planned gesture at the end of a three-day visit to ex-Soviet Armenia came in the face of fresh Turkish ire after Francis used the word "genocide" to refer to the century-old slaughter that Ankara furiously rejects.

The Vatican was forced to refute claims from Turkey that Pope Francis showed a

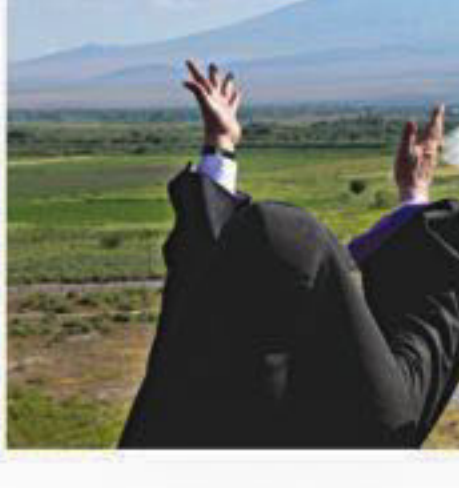
"mentality of the Crusades" over his use of the term.

Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Nurettin Canikli late on Saturday said it bore traces of "the mentality of the Crusades."

The Vatican rejected the allegations and said the pontiff was trying to build "bridges not walls" and had nothing against Turkey.

When Francis first used the term "genocide" in 2015, on the centenary of the 1915-1917 killings that Armenians say wiped out some 1.5 million of their people, Ankara angrily recalled its envoy from the Holy See for nearly a year.

Armenians have long sought international recognition for the World War I killings as genocide. Turkey -- the Ottoman Empire's successor state -- argues that it was a collective tragedy in which both Turks and



# Clinton takes lead over Trump: polls

AFP, Washington

Two head-to-head polls released yesterday showed a resurgent Hillary Clinton taking a lead in the US presidential race, after a tumultuous month for Donald Trump, who has failed to rally confidence among voters or party leaders.

If the presidential election were held today, 51 percent of poll respondents said they would vote for Clinton, versus 39 percent for Trump, according to a Washington Post-ABC News poll.

It was conducted Monday through Thursday of last week among 836 registered voters and had a margin of error of four percentage points.

A Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll showed a slimmer lead for Clinton, 46 percent to Trump's 41 percent. They were essentially tied, 39 percent for the Democrat Clinton and 38 percent for Republican Trump, when third-party candidates were included, results showed. The poll of 1,000 registered voters was conducted Sunday through Thursday of last week and had a margin of error of 3.1 percentage points.

The surveys come after a difficult month for the combative Trump, a political novice who fired his campaign manager and faced criticism for poor campaign organization and a paltry war chest of \$1.3 billion at the end of May. Clinton, who had repeatedly pounded Trump as being " temperamentally unfit," finished the month with \$42 million.

## NEWSIN brief

### At least 35 killed in bus crash in China

AFP, Beijing

At least 35 people were killed and 11 injured yesterday when a bus with 55 people crashed on a highway in central China and burst into flames, state media reported. Huge clouds of thick black smoke billowed from the vehicle after the bus slammed into a roadside concrete barrier in Hunan province, video footage showed.

### Nigeria: 5,000 rescued from Boko Haram

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

The Nigerian army says it has rescued more than 5,000 people who were being held hostage by Boko Haram following a clearing operation in four remote villages in the northeastern Borno state. The 5,000 rescued, mostly women and children, had been living under Boko Haram for more than six years, since the armed group launched its violent campaign in 2009.

### 11 killed in Somalia hotel attack

AFP, Mogadishu

A junior minister was among 11 people killed in an attack by al-Qaeda-affiliated Shabaab militants on a hotel in the Somali capital, the foreign ministry said yesterday. Gunmen then stormed the Naasa Hablood hotel in an assault lasting for several hours. Special security forces ended the siege after killing three attackers inside the hotel.