**Boris Johnson’s ‘Brexit Day’ speech**

**31st January 2020**

Tonight we are leaving the European Union.

For many people this is an astonishing moment of hope, a moment they thought would never come. And there are many of course who feel a sense of anxiety and loss.

And then of course there is a third group – perhaps the biggest – who had started to worry that the whole political wrangle would never come to an end.

I understand all those feelings, and our job as the government – my job – is to bring this country together now and take us forward.

And the most important thing to say tonight is that this is not an end but a beginning. This is the moment when the dawn breaks and the curtain goes up on a new act in our great national drama.

And yes it is partly about using these new powers – this recaptured sovereignty – to deliver the changes people voted for.

Whether that is by controlling immigration or creating freeports or liberating our fishing industry or doing free trade deals, or simply making our laws and rules for the benefit of the people of this country.

And of course I think that is the right and healthy and democratic thing to do.

Because for all its strengths and for all its admirable qualities, the EU has evolved over 50 years in a direction that no longer suits this country.

And that is a judgment that you, the people, have now confirmed at the polls. Not once but twice.

And yet this moment is far bigger than that. It is not just about some legal extrication.

It is potentially a moment of real national renewal and change.

This is the dawn of a new era in which we no longer accept that your life chances – your family’s life chances - should depend on which part of the country you grow up in. This is the moment when we really begin to unite and level up.

Defeating crime, transforming our NHS, and with better education, with superb technology and with the biggest revival of our infrastructure since the Victorians.

We will spread hope and opportunity to every part of the UK. And if we can get this right I believe that with every month that goes by we will grow in confidence, not just at home but abroad, and in our diplomacy, in our fight against climate change, in our campaigns for human rights or female education or free trade.

We will rediscover muscles that we have not used for decades, the power of independent thought and action.

Not because we want to detract from anything done by our EU friends – of course not - we want this to be the beginning of a new era of friendly cooperation between the EU and an energetic Britain.

A Britain that is simultaneously a great European power and truly global in our range and ambitions

And when I look at this country’s incredible assets our scientists, our engineers, our world-leading universities, our armed forces, when I look at the potential of this country waiting to be unleashed, I know that we can turn this opportunity into a stunning success.

And whatever the bumps in the road ahead I know that we will succeed.

We have obeyed the people, we have taken back the tools of self-government, now is the time to use those tools to unleash the full potential of this brilliant country and to make better the lives of everyone in every corner of our United Kingdom.