

GOVERNMENT

Theresa May resigns as prime minister amid Brexit struggles

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Prime Minister Theresa May has resigned. Image credit: UK Gov

By STAFF REPORTS

Following difficulties to get a Brexit deal passed in Parliament, Theresa May is stepping down as prime minister of the United Kingdom.

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Effective June 7, Ms. May will leave her role as leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party, paving the way for a new prime minister to take her place. In a statement, Ms. May said that the inability to get a Brexit deal passed is of "deep regret" and that it was time for new leadership to take on the process of leaving the European Union.

Brexit exit

After the referendum to leave the European Union in June 2016, in which 52 percent of U.K. citizens voted in favor of separating from the union, former Prime Minister David Cameron resigned from office. The politician led the campaign to stay in the E.U., and said that he did not feel he could lead the country in this new direction ([see story](#)).

Ms. May ran to succeed Mr. Cameron as the leader of the Conservative Party, and won, becoming the U.K.'s second female prime minister in July 2016. While she had also backed the vote to remain in the E.U., she recognized that the public's wishes needed to be respected and sought to deliver a deal for the political breakup.

Intended to be a two-year process, Brexit has taken longer as British lawmakers cannot reach a consensus over a deal.

Brexit was pushed beyond its original March 29 deadline, as Parliament voted to push back its split from the European Union.

Following failed votes to gain favor for Prime Minister May's Brexit deal and a no-deal exit from the E.U., lawmakers passed a vote on a motion to delay the break up ([see story](#)). In April, the E.U. gave the U.K. a six month extension.



Brexit continues to approach with uncertain terms. Image credit: European Union

"Back in 2016, we gave the British people a choice. Against all predictions, the British people voted to leave the European Union," Ms. May said in a statement. "I feel as certain today as I did three years ago that in a democracy, if you give people a choice, you have a duty to implement what they decide. I have done my best to do that.

"I negotiated the terms of our exit and a new relationship with our closest neighbors that protects jobs, our security and our union," she said. "I have done everything I can to convince MPs to back that deal. Sadly I have not been able to do so. I tried three times.

"I believe it was right to persevere, even when the odds against success seemed high. But it is now clear to me that it is in the best interest of the country for a new prime minister to lead that effort."

The prime minister noted that to enable the next in the position to succeed, members of Parliament will have to compromise.

Ms. May said that the process for picking a new prime minister should start the week after her resignation, and that she will remain on until her successor is chosen.