Twitter Thread by Tony Connelly

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Ireland's foreign min @SimonCoveney says there will be no breakthru at the #euco this wk, that EU fishermen will not be "sold out" in order to secure a future relationship deal, and that if there is a deal it will not be ratified unless the UK "remove" Internal Mkt Bill clauses

2/ Speaking at the General Affairs Council Mr Coveney said: “We value fishermen, we value their contribution across the EU and cerainly EU fishermen are not going to be sold out in an effort to get an agreement on a future relationship with the UK on trade.”

3/ He said that while there had been some progress on the level playing field area, there had been “little or no” movement on fisheries. Both sides, he said, had legitimate concerns on the issue.

4/ Mr Coveney had bilateral meetings with both @MichelBarnier and @MarosSefcovic

5/ “There was a very clear message that if we do manage to negotiate a deal on a future relationship agreement that involves many different areas, before that deal can be ratified or finalised, the domestic legislation that the UK has introduced...

6/ ...effectively threatening to break the Withdrawal Agreement and Northern Ireland Protocol, that that legislation will need to be removed."

7/ However, he said progress had been made by the Joint Committee on implementing the NI Protocol, and he said it would have to be implemented in a way that "worked for people living in NI and the island of Ireland as a whole"

8/ He concluded: “I think a deal is very much still possible. But there’s an awful lot of work to do for the two negotiating teams. But for the European Union, the perspective is that unity is strength and today we got very strong unity on all of the issues.”