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## **UK'S BORIS JOHNSON WARNS LAWMAKERS AGAINST BLOCKING NO-DEAL**

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British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has urged his own Conservative MPs not to support an opposition maneuver to block a "no-deal" Brexit. The UK Parliament is set for heated debate when it reconvenes on Tuesday.

In a statement outside Downing Street, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson urged lawmakers to back the government against an opposition effort to stop Britain leaving the European Union without a withdrawal agreement.

Johnson had just emerged from a meeting of his Cabinet on Monday to craft a response to opposition-led efforts to prevent a "no-deal" Brexit.

The prime minister told rebel MPs within his own Conservative Party that they should not try to undermine efforts to secure a new deal. Johnson, who claims that the possibility of no-deal is necessary to improve the deal for the UK, said the parliamentary effort would "chop the legs" out from under the UK position.

"There are no circumstances under which I will ask Brussels to delay," said Johnson. "We are leaving on the 31st of October, no ifs or buts."

Johnson, whose short speech was accompanied by loud chanting from anti-Brexit demonstrators, said he didn't want an early general election, after speculation that he had been about to call one. However, he made it clear that if the government was defeated, it would hold a vote on Wednesday to approve an early election, most likely to be held on October 14.

"I don't want an election, you don't want an election" the prime minister said. "Let's get on with the people's agenda."

### **Johnson: 'I believe we will get a deal'**

The pound slid against the dollar earlier on Monday, amid speculation about a snap election.

Opposition lawmakers aim to pass a law demanding the government either negotiate a new divorce deal with the EU, or request a Brexit extension beyond the October 31 deadline.

However, they have just days to do so. Johnson last week announced Parliament would be suspended for over a month shortly after it reconvenes.

The prime minister had earlier canceled a planned meeting with rebel Tory MPs opposed to leaving without a deal. His team had also told British media that they could be expelled from the Conservative Party if they voted against the government, or even if they abstained in a possible vote.

Details of the opposition's draft legislation to prevent no-deal emerged on Monday afternoon, in a tweet from opposition Labour Party MP Hilary Benn.

"The bill gives the government time either to reach a new agreement with the European Union at the European Council meeting next month, or to seek Parliaments specific consent to leave the EU without a deal," Benn tweeted.

Johnson is seeking the removal of the so-called backstop clause from the Withdrawal Agreement, which guarantees an open border remains between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland after Brexit.

The government of Johnson's predecessor, Theresa May, spent two years negotiating the agreement with Brussels as the first step in an orderly exit process, but the British Parliament failed to ratify it on three occasions.

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