



## CHIEF MINISTER'S SPEECH - NATIONAL DAY 2018

Hello Gibraltar!

You always look great in Red & White!

My fellow Gibraltarians

What a time to be alive!

I want to start by remembering those who cannot be in Casemates with us today.

I want us all to give a warm welcome to those watching us from St Bernard's Hospital, from Calpe House in London or from hospitals outside Gibraltar.

I want us also to give a warm welcome to those watching from Mount Alvernia,  
The John Mac Wing,  
Hillside,  
Bishop Canilla House,  
Albert Risso House  
Seamaster Lodge or  
Charles Bruzon house.

And welcome to any person who is at home today, through age or illness.

We know you are with us.

In mind.

In determination.

AND in Gibraltarian spirit.

I also want to say a special hello to all of our Jewish Community and our Muslim Community.

Both are today celebrating New Year.

The Jewish Community is celebrating Rosh Hashana.

We say on behalf of all of us: SHANA TOVA for the Jewish year 5,779.

To the Muslim Community, celebrating Al Hijra, we say happy Muharram tomorrow.

Today we have been joined by some great friends of Gibraltar.



I want in particular to thank the all party group in Parliament and their leader Bob Neill for being here.

It is also hugely important that we are joined, for the second year running, by a UK Minister, Sir Alan Duncan.

The presence of Sir Alan cements the support of the British Government in London for our National Day celebrations.

And the final clincher of support is the video message from the Prime Minister herself.

And today in the Foreign Office the flag that flies is the Castle and Key of Gibraltar.

But also with us is Arlene Foster, who was and would be First Minister of Northern Ireland one of the nations that make up the United Kingdom.

Thank you Arlene for being here.

And although they are not here with us, I have a message of support today from the Leaders of the other nations that make up the United Kingdom

From Carwyn Jones in Wales, a message wishing us all the very best for this day

From Nicola Sturgeon in Scotland a message of support for a happy and successful National Day.

And an express commitment to the relationship between Gibraltar and Scotland and to working together as we leave the EU.

Because by celebrating here our GIBRALTARIAN identity.

We are celebrating our place in the BRITISH FAMILY OF NATIONS

And THAT is where we belong.

In the BRITISH FAMILY OF NATIONS.

And so to the Self Determination for Gibraltar Group, we say THANK YOU for twenty five years of officially organized NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS.

Thank you to Denis Matthews, Willy Serfaty, Denis Cardonna and Richard Buttigieg, the Chairmen of the SDGG in that time.

And thank you to GJBS for building this stage each year to your usual excellent standards.

A special thank you today to the man who kick started this official celebration of National Day, Sir Joe Bossano.



This year he has been recognized by Her Majesty the Queen for his 46 years as a member of Parliament.

And today, in the most fitting location, on the most fitting day of the year, we have honoured him together with the most fitting accolade the Freedom of the City and the nation he has spent his life defending.

And thanks to Joe and the SDGG, every year, we gather here.

We come to celebrate our people.

To assert our sacred rights over this land of ours.

For our right to this Rock is sacred

It is inalienable.

And it is perpetual.

And THAT has been the fight of generations of Gibraltarians.

And as we face up to one of the greatest challenges in our history we must learn the lesson of those earlier generations of Gibraltarians.

Think of the Evacuation Generation.

Sent to London

To Madeira

To NORTHERN IRELAND – WELCOME AGAIN ARLENE

AND TO JAMAICA – WELCOME TO OUR FRIENDS FROM KINGSTON with whom we will TWIN tomorrow.

That Evacuation Generation had the courage

They had the resourcefulness

To survive a vicious war away from home.

And then they had the GUTS to fight to return to the Rock

To our home.

And to start again in 1945.



And then, the generation we most remember today as we celebrate the referendum of 1967.

The Referendum Generation.

They stood up to a dictator.

With pencil and ballot.

They saw off a belligerent General.

And they chose the right path  
although they knew it was the harder path.

And by doing so, they secured the future of our homeland.

Within two years, they were locked into this paradise we call home.

And they

The Closed Frontier generation

They knew it would be hard to have all land links to Europe cut off

But they did not cower or doubt.

They did not fall like a ripe fruit.

They strengthened their resolve

They strengthened the resolve of every future generation of Gibraltarian

And they strengthened the resilience of this ROCK OF AGES

And now its our turn

It's the turn of the Brexit Generation

And now we, the Brexit Generation, will lead our people through this time of flux and change

Because this is our time

It is our time to take responsibility

Our time to work to deliver no less a successful inheritance for our children than we took from our parents

Our time to turn the Brexit Challenge into a Brexit win



And to achieve that, We will do more

We will go further

Because in the comfort and prosperity of today  
we will succeed  
so long as we never forget the sacrifices of yesterday  
that still shape the privileges our children will enjoy tomorrow

And in that way we will emerge stronger, as a people forged in the determination of those who came before us

And with the resolve, strength and vision of those of us who KNOW that our future is brighter than our past

That Gibraltarian talent can take on the best in the world

That we will build the best Gibraltar we can for our children and our children's children despite Brexit

Because it is in our DNA to work, to sacrifice and to innovate

And to make a success of our ROCK

Maybe that's why our athletes are so feared

And our footballers so unwelcome in some places!

And that in or out of the European Union, we are a hard working people of peace,

Of Goodwill

A people who will ensure that our rock is always first, foremost and forever

The homeland of the Gibraltarians -

The extraordinary people of the ROCK!

My fellow Gibraltarians

I know that each year, when we gather here, we feel the whispers of our forefathers

We can hear them tell us in our souls that with every day of our effort and our work we are building a nation



We are building a nation of peace and prosperity

We are building a nation of diversity and freedom

We are building a better Gibraltar

As we leave the European Union, we say we remain proud to have also been builders of the Europe of today

And we will be proud to be partners of the Europe of tomorrow.

And we want to see the UK and Gibraltar together find our different places in the future in that project

That's why Brexit will not defeat us

But neither will it define us

Because our ancestors came from every shore of the Mediterranean and beyond

They built their dreams in the face of adversity

From Genoa, Malta, India, North Africa, Britain.

We overcame every siege to live the British dream

Leaving the EU is just one more step on our journey

The people of Gibraltar are British heart and soul

Nothing will stop us now from protecting and building our homeland

Nothing will stop us now from nurturing the covenant of freedom between us and Britain that we are the only ones free to choose our own destiny

Because this is our home

This is our land

This is our rock

That's why I have said it before

But I will say it again

We are THE GIBRALTARIANS



Red white and blue

Red white and proud

Red white and free

LONG LIVE GIBRALTAR!