



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
PRESS OFFICE
No.6 Convent Place
Gibraltar
Tel:20070071; Fax: 20043057**

PRESS RELEASE

No. 95/2010

Date: 30th April 2010

To mark Workers Day on May 1st the Chief Minister has addressed an Open Letter to the leaders of Gibraltar's three Trade Unions, Charles Sisarello of Unite, Michael Tampin of GGCA and Joe Cortes of NASUWT.

The text of the letter is reproduced in this Press statement.

“Open Letter to Trade Union Leaders by the Chief Minister, Peter Caruana to mark Workers Day.

The real commitment of politicians to the interests of workers is properly measured by what they do for workers, and how they treat workers, when they hold political office and power, not by words when they are out of office.

My Government has never regarded or dealt with trade unions as if they represented a threat, rather we have dealt with you as valued interlocutors and social partners. As a result many big improvements for workers, past and present, have been achieved.

In this way, working closely with trade unions, we have been able to very significantly lower taxes for workers, increase pay and leave entitlements, greatly increase the minimum wage, extend occupational pensions to many hundreds of workers, hugely increase the income of pensioners (retired workers!) by massive rises in pensions and elimination of tax on pensions. We have reformed companies and restored dignity at work to hundreds of workers. We have, together, protected hundreds of MOD jobs in imaginative and bold ways.

Above all, we have been able to create a huge number of jobs. Nearly 7500 extra jobs since 1996. And there have never been more jobs and job opportunities for Gibraltarians. Over 1100 more Gibraltarians in jobs now, compared to 1996. The number of Gibraltarians in jobs now stands at an all time record high – and by a very big margin.

I want to acknowledge the huge contribution of workers to this great economic success, and to assure workers that we will continue to ensure that the fruits of this economic success continues to be distributed throughout the community, through pay rises, tax cuts, government subsidies, pension rises, and the continuing improvement and expansion of health, social, education and other public services and amenities – from which workers and their families benefit.

On the occasion of Workers Day, I wish to commemorate the essential contribution of all workers to our society and to our economy. I also wish to thank you, and your Union's staff, for your tireless work in support and defence of worker interests.”