



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**MINISTRY OF FAMILY, YOUTH & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**  
**14 Governor's Parade**  
**Gibraltar**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

No. 260/2011

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> August 2011

### **MINIMUM INCOME GUARANTEE**

The Minister for Family, Youth and Community Affairs, the Hon. Jaime Netto has expressed great surprise that notwithstanding his request to the Opposition Member, the Hon. J Bossano, to provide him with the names and contact details of the “numerous individuals” who allegedly have complained to the Opposition of receiving a lower Minimum Income Guarantee payment in August 2011, only three individuals have actually written to the Department of Social Security seeking an explanation after Mr Bossano apparently passed the contents of the Minister’s letter to those that had approached the Opposition.

Mr Netto says that the Opposition’s declaration that they had received “numerous complaints” on the Minimum Income Guarantee is a total exaggeration contrived to confuse beneficiaries receiving Minimum Income Guarantee and to make these individuals and the public believe that the Government has reduced this payment when this in fact is not the case.

The Department of Social Security has written to the three Minimum Income Guarantee beneficiaries that wrote to the department seeking an explanation in relation to their August payment. The three individuals have been informed in writing that the Minimum Income Guarantee is a “top-up” payment scheme designed to guarantee persons aged 60 and over that do not work a set monthly income. All household income, such as Old Age Pension, Community Care Household Cost Allowance, occupational pension and investment income, is taken into account when assessing Minimum Income Guarantee payments. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011 all Minimum Income Guarantee beneficiaries have had their payments reviewed and any increases to their household income taken into account in order to bring a person’s income up to the guaranteed level.

It is clear from this whole episode, that Mr Bossano has either not done his homework in relation to understanding the concept of the Minimum Income

Guarantee scheme as introduced in 2000, or most probably sought deliberately to use elderly people as a perverse tool for the GSLP's political ends.

We now know that instead of "numerous complaints" there are only 3 cases of beneficiaries seeking further explanations in relation to their Minimum Income Guarantee payments. The similarity in the wording of the three complaint letters received leave no doubt that the letters have been drafted by Mr Bossano himself in a manner that deprives them of attending the offices of the Department of Social Security in person with a view of obtaining the full explanation of the facts by the staff. Mr Bossano has contrived the series of events in a manner so as to be the sole interpreter to the "alleged complainants".

It is shameful that once again Mr Bossano utilises vulnerable people in a deplorable way. The new leader of the GSLP, Mr Fabian Picardo, should assert his new authority as Leader of the party and stop any utilisation of vulnerable people for party political ends.