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CHIEF MINISTER ADDRESSES LABOUR PARTY RECEPTION

The Chief Minister hosted the annual Gibraltar Government reception at the Labour Party Conference in Manchester on Sunday. Mr Picardo addressed the packed reception together with long-time friend of Gibraltar, Mr Lyndsey Hoyle MP, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. Mr Hoyle spoke in the absence of Mr Jim Dobbins MP, the Chairman of the Gibraltar Group in Parliament who was away from the United Kingdom.

In his speech, Mr Picardo raised the issue of the constant incursions by Guardia Civil vessels into British Gibraltar Territorial Waters as well as issue of the threat to Gibraltar's remote gaming industry from the UK Treasury's proposed "consumption tax".

Mr Hoyle MP pledged support for Gibraltar on behalf of the Labour rank and file as well as Labour members of Parliament and the Gibraltar group which includes representatives of all political parties.

The Gibraltar reception was attended by a large number of Labour MPs and Councillors from around the United Kingdom as well as representatives from The Falkland Islands and the trade unions.

The Chief Minister also addressed the reception held for the South West Region, given that Gibraltar votes as part of this region in European Parliamentary elections.

Whilst in Manchester Mr Picardo also had a chance to meet with Mr Ed Miliband, the leader of the Labour Party and national officers of Unite.