



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

PRESS RELEASE

No: 147/2013

Date: 7th March 2013

Change in Immigration Act will improve Gibraltar's trade with Morocco

Gibraltar has amended its Immigration, Asylum and Refugee Act so as to waive visa requirements for nationals of specified countries. The first such individuals to benefit from this change will be Moroccan nationals holding valid Schengen multiple entry visas. In the past, Moroccans with Schengen visas were permitted to enter Gibraltar only on a case-by-case basis with most of the successful applications being permitted only on compassionate grounds. From this week onwards, however, Moroccans with Schengen multiple entry visas will be allowed into Gibraltar for a maximum of 21 days without the needs to apply for any special entry permission.

It is hoped that this change to the Immigration Act will encourage more business and commerce to be conducted between Gibraltar and Morocco and will promote Gibraltar as a tourist destination in the Kingdom.

The Immigration Act changes coincide exactly with this week's launch of negotiations between the EU and Morocco for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) which Foreign Secretary William Hague said would bring closer economic integration between Morocco and the EU single market.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo said: "Gibraltar has had a long and rich relationship with the Kingdom of Morocco and its people. For many years, however, we have failed to progress the relationship from the provision of labour by Moroccan

nationals, without which Gibraltar would not have survived the blockade of the late 60s, 70s and 80s. As I said in my speech on the Ceremonial Opening of Parliament in December 2011, just after the election, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is therefore now keen to develop modern tourism, trade and business links with the Kingdom and people of Morocco and this action is an important first step in that direction. It will facilitate visits to Gibraltar by Moroccan nationals for tourism, leisure or business purposes. As part of this initiative we will be promoting Gibraltar in Morocco more widely and not just in the north of the country but beyond that in main cities such as Rabat, Casablanca and Marrakech. I very much look forward to welcoming visitors from Morocco to Gibraltar and to working more closely with commercial entities in the Kingdom."