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FIRST SEA LORD VISITS No 6

During his last visit in uniform to Gibraltar, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, the First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff paid a call on the Chief Minister on Sunday morning. Admiral Stanhope retires from the Navy in a few weeks' time.

'It may be my last visit in uniform but I am very much here on a professional basis,' said the Admiral. 'I am here to meet as many members of the Navy as I can and, in particular, to visit the Gibraltar Squadron to recognise the work they are doing to protect and defend the sovereignty of British Gibraltar Territorial Waters in very challenging circumstances. 'But, at a personal level, Gibraltar holds many memories for me. Having joined the Navy in 1970, I had my first-ever 'run ashore' in Gibraltar – a very different Gibraltar from what it is today. I think that it is quite poignant that I should come to Gibraltar just before I leave the Service.'

Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo said, 'The Navy has always played an important role in Gibraltar's history and it still does today. I am pleased that the First Sea Lord wished to visit Gibraltar today and this morning's meeting gave us the opportunity to discuss the various issues affecting British Gibraltar Territorial Waters and the Government's continuing excellent relationship with the MOD.'

On behalf of the people of Gibraltar, the Chief Minister presented Admiral Stanhope with a silver model of the Rock and, in turn, the Admiral presented Mr Picardo with his personal seal and crest.