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Chief Minister's Tribute to the Hon Charles Bruzon

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo, paid the following tribute:

"Losing Charles Bruzon has filled my wife Justine, me and Cabinet and party colleagues with sadness and grief. He will leave a massive void around the Cabinet table. Charles was a friend as well as a colleague. He was a person who always gave me calm and good advice. In fact, I do not recall ever having seen Charles flustered. He was truly unflappable!

I met him in the late nineties when, having returned from university I became more seriously involved in politics. He was then a member of the Voice of Gibraltar, lobbying and arguing Gibraltar's cause with that group.

His commitment to his family was absolute and his parallel commitment to Gibraltar was unquestionable. Throughout these early days he would often frame his thoughts based on the writings and statements of his late father, who had also written extensively about the issue of Gibraltar and Gibraltarians' rights. We were subsequently both chosen for the GSLP slate at the 2003 election.

From the moment he was elected he set to work; not just meeting people who had problems relating to his portfolios but also visiting many of them and going out to see those with mobility problems who might not be able to visit the GSLP's headquarters.

I had the pleasure of sharing an office with him from the date that I was elected leader of the GSLP in April 2011. We would hold two meetings at once in the same office, in the confidence and ease that had grown between us as part of what he would describe as "the 2003 intake"; which included our mutual friend, the Hon Lucio Randall.

I will always remember how at ease he felt with the microphone when we were out on the stump at hustings in the estates. We all used to joke with him that he had been taught by the Vatican and was a better public speaker than all the rest of us as a result!

We had a great time fighting the election together in 2011 as we had in 2003 and 2007. In 2011 we won, and I remember hugging him; both of us happy about the political success we had achieved and apprehensive about the challenge ahead of us. "Here we go" he said to me in that embrace.

Whether he was leading a religious or a secular political ministry, all those who worked with him will remember only kindness from him.

I always told him he was a most unlikely politician. He reminded me that his faith pushed him to try to improve the lives of those in need and politics was one vehicle for that in the modern world. How right he was to have chosen that path which, given a few more months, he might have seen bear fruit for those he had seen before he was elected and to whom he and all of us in the Cabinet are committed.

Today our thoughts are with his memory and with his beloved Marilou and his children and grandchildren.

What a great friend. What a great man. What a great loss."