



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
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PRESS RELEASE

No: 437/2013

Date: 20th June 2013

Garcia tackles Gibraltar-EU issues in Brussels

The Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Joseph Garcia, has held a series of very useful back-to-back meetings in Brussels with officials of the European Commission and Members of the European Parliament.

A number of issues which affect Gibraltar in Europe were discussed during the meetings. This included on-line gaming, taxation, aviation, environmental and maritime matters. Dr Garcia also raised the continuing delays at the frontier.

The Deputy Chief Minister, at the invitation of the Chairman Liberal Democrat MEP Sir Graham Watson, also addressed a meeting organised by the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) on the subject of maritime security from a Gibraltar perspective. He told the audience, which included the European Commission and a number of NGOs, that Gibraltar was ideally placed at the crossroads of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic and went over a number of security issues as they affect the Port of Gibraltar and British Gibraltar Territorial Waters (BGTW). The address was very well received and it was followed by a lively question and answer session.

Throughout this week, Gibraltar's impressive exhibition stand at the European Parliament has been visited by dozens of EU officials and visiting delegates, including a mission from several Latin American countries. Other visitors to the stand have included British MEPs from all the major parties and from all parts of the UK. A Gibraltarian who works in Brussels Mr Brian Porro, also called at the stand. The space was booked by Conservative MEP Ashley Fox.

Coincidentally, the stand was located close to a main conference hall in which a conference on EU Fishing Policies was being held and many of the delegates called at the exhibition to hear about Gibraltar's fishing and maritime issues.

'My various meetings have been of considerable value because they have served to follow-up a number of matters that we discussed during our last visit in March. The stand has definitely raised Gibraltar's profile," said Dr Garcia. 'Many people have told me this is the one of the most eye-catching exhibitions to have been held in the Parliament. The Government is very grateful to Sir Graham Watson MEP, who also arranged the programme for the visit, and to Ashley Fox MEP, who hosted the stand, for their kind assistance."