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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Minister for the Armed Forces Visits No 6**

The UK's Minister of State for the Armed Forces, the Rt Hon Mark Francois MP, was welcomed to No 6 Convent Place this morning by the Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo MP and Deputy Chief Minister, the Hon Dr Joseph Garcia MP.

Mr Francois was accompanied to No 6 by Commander British Forces, Commodore John Clink.

It was Mr Francois' first official visit to the Rock since taking over his Ministerial appointment in October of this year but he has made several visits to Gibraltar in a different capacity as an MP. Earlier in his career he was a Reservist infantry officer in the Royal Anglian Regiment.

The Chief Minister said that it had been a most useful and constructive meeting. 'I was pleased to hear the Minister give such a clear commitment to retaining Gibraltar as a Forward Mounting Base for the British Forces and his commitment to the future of jobs within the MoD establishment in Gibraltar,' added Mr Picardo.