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Government set to increase international lobbying work

The Government is increasing its lobbying presence in Brussels and Washington in order to ensure that the profile of Gibraltar is heightened at a political level.

This follows the visits by the Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia first to Brussels in February and then to Washington in March.

The Government announced in February that it has taken a policy decision to increase Gibraltar's presence in Brussels. This will include the expansion of the set-up Gibraltar currently enjoys in the European Union along the lines of that which is already in place in London. The Government will adopt a phased approach to this expansion which will involve both the direct or indirect recruitment or deployment of staff and the acquisition of suitable premises from where this EU lobbying campaign will be spearheaded.

In addition to this, the Government has appointed law firm and lobbyists Holland and Knight to act as its representatives before the Executive and Legislative branches of the Government in Washington. This will involve work for Gibraltar on both economic and security issues at a cost of \$35,000 monthly on a six months trial basis. This will allow the Government to monitor the effectiveness of the contract before determining how to proceed in the future. This is in addition to the existing lobbying work for Gibraltar in Washington which has continued since the GSLP/Liberals came into office.

The Government believes that the format in Washington should be different from that used in Europe, namely in Brussels and in London, because of the different way in which this has traditionally worked in the United States. It is essential to take these steps in order to protect the long-term interests of Gibraltar.