



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Garcia meets EU Home Affairs Commissioner in Brussels**

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia is in Brussels for a series of meetings with the European Commission and in the European Parliament. Top of the agenda are the continuing deliberate, politically motivated and illegal controls imposed by the Spanish authorities at the border.

This morning Dr Garcia met with Home Affairs Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom, who is the lead EU Commissioner looking into the situation at the land frontier between Gibraltar and Spain.

The meeting follows closely the second visit to Gibraltar last week by the team of EU inspectors who have been tasked with examining the progress on the ground since their previous visit in September 2013. It will be recalled that in November the inspectors produced a report which made a series of recommendations to Gibraltar and Spain and called for action within six months.

The Gibraltar Government has complied with all the works recommended in the report at a time when Spain has not even started. Dr Garcia stressed this point to the Commissioner. He also echoed the concern that exists in Gibraltar that Spain will again use the delays at the border in the weeks ahead in order to target Gibraltar's tourism sector during the summer.

The Deputy Chief Minister handed the Commissioner a dossier with the frontier data for the month of June. This includes information on maximum incoming and outgoing vehicular delays as well as outgoing pedestrian queues. It also includes photographic evidence and media reports on the delays. The point was made that despite lengthy queues practically every day of June, there were no delays on 1 July when the UK Minister for Europe came to Gibraltar and no delay on 2 July when the Commission inspectors were there.

Dr Garcia made emphasis on the fact that Spanish organisations have now added their voices to the discontent that exists against the lengthy delays to cross the border as a result of the Spanish controls. The information pack included recent public statements made against the queues made by the Mayor of La Linea and the Junta de Andalucia.

Commenting on the visit, Dr Garcia said:

"This is the second Government visit to Brussels in the last five months. It follows on from visits by other groups and organisations. It is important to keep that momentum going. A further trip to the European institutions by students from Gibraltar is planned for after the summer.

Secondly, the timing now is also important. The visit takes place barely a few days after the Commission inspectors examined progress at the border. It was therefore important to brief and update the Commissioner directly face to face on a number of matters."

The Deputy Chief Minister is accompanied by the Government's Chief Legal Adviser Michael Llamas QC, Principal Secretary Caine Sanchez, who is leading on the Frontier Monitoring Project, and PA Ernest Francis.

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