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PRESS RELEASE

No: 663/2014

Date: 2nd December 2014

Chief Minister updates Foreign Affairs Committee on queues and incursions

The Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia today raised Gibraltar issues with Members of the Foreign Affairs, a Committee of the House of Commons. This was organised for Overseas Territories leaders as part of the agenda for the Joint Ministerial Council between the UK and OT Governments.

Mr Picardo updated those present on the five hour border delays on Monday, a day which also saw Spanish state vessels enter British Gibraltar Territorial Waters seven times. He also thanked those present for their support of Gibraltar.

The plenary session of the Joint Ministerial Council was opened jointly by the Minister for the Overseas Territories, James Duddridge, and the Chief Minister, Fabian Picardo, this afternoon.

Addressing the assembled territory leaders and the UK Government, Mr Picardo said that in general terms, the Overseas Territories welcomed the positive approach that the Coalition Government had taken. He explained that there was prosperity in some Overseas Territories, much potential in others but that there were still issues and problems that needed to be discussed. Mr Picardo went on to say that the relationship should be one of equals working together in partnership.

This was followed by working sessions on Economic Development and on Security, including territorial waters. The Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Mark Francois MP, chaired the latter.

There will be further sessions on Policing, Environment, Health, Pensions and Passports/Migration.

The Minister for the Environment, Dr John Cortes, earlier participated in a working breakfast with Members of the Environmental Audit Committee of the House of Commons. The Minister for Financial Services, Albert Isola, participated in the financial services session with the Treasury. This was led by Treasury Minister, David Gauke MP.