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PRESS RELEASE

No: 687/2014

Date: 9th December 2014

Chief Minister reshuffles the Cabinet

The Chief Minister has today, following consultation with the Deputy Chief Minister, reshuffled the Cabinet coinciding with the third anniversary of the election of the GSLP/Liberal Government.

All Ministers have seen a part of their portfolio reshuffled and have at the same time taken on different responsibilities.

The Chief Minister considered that it was important to give members of the Government ministerial experience in new areas with a view to the future and to the general election in the next fourteen months. It has also become obvious, from an administrative point of view, that some departments will work better together under the same Minister.

Some of the main changes are:

Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia will also become the Minister for European Affairs which will include responsibility for political lobbying and the new office in Brussels. This formalises the political work with the EU institutions and elsewhere that Dr Garcia has been leading on until now. He also formally assumes the oversight of all Government Projects with a view to manifesto commitments that remain to be completed.

Minister for Health, the Environment, Energy and Climate Change Dr John Cortes

The Minister for Health and the Environment Dr John Cortes will take on responsibility for Energy, Climate Change and the Elderly. In that context, he will also now deal with Utilities. Given the close connection between the Elderly and Health, it makes sense to combine this responsibility under one Minister.

Minister for Education, Justice and International Exchange of Information Gilbert Licudi

The Minister for Education and Justice will also take on responsibility for the international exchange of information, given his existing responsibility for Justice, which includes liaising with the Royal Gibraltar Police, he will also assume responsibility for the Fire

Brigade and for Civil Contingencies. Minister Licudi will also receive responsibility for some areas of social services, which will not include the elderly or disabled persons.

Minister for Economic Development and Telecommunications Joe Bossano

Minister Bossano will take on formal responsibility for Economic Development and Telecommunications, International Trade and the Gibraltar Savings Bank. This will also include European Union funding.

Minister for Business, Employment and Skills Neil Costa

The Minister for Business, Employment and Skills will take on responsibility for labour and social security, the important area of industrial tribunal reform, consumer affairs, commercial affairs and health and safety. He will also be responsible for Postal Services.

Minister for Civic Rights, Heritage, Culture, Youth and Sports Steven Linares

The Minister for Culture will see Civic Rights added to this portfolio. He will be responsible for citizen's advice, the Ombudsman, consumer protection and drugs and substance abuse rehabilitation, as well as general responsibility for Bruce's Farm.

Minister for Housing, Tourism and Equality Samantha Sacramento

The Minister for Housing and Equality will be responsible for equality, minorities and the disabled. She will also have responsibility for hostels, housing works and tourism.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services Paul Balban

The Minister for Transport will be responsible for the implementation of the Sustainable Traffic and Transport Plan (STTP). The portfolio will include the Port, public transport, licensing, traffic and roads.

Minister for Financial Services, Gaming and Maritime Services Albert Isola

Minister Isola will have additional responsibility for shipping and maritime services including ship and yacht registration.

In addition to these changes, the Chief Minister will also become the new Chairman of Gibtelecom and of the Gibraltar Development Corporation.

Commenting on the Cabinet reshuffle, the Chief Minister Fabian Picardo said:

"I have carefully considered the way in which the Government has been working until now both from a political and an administrative point of view. The Deputy Chief Minister and I have discussed in detail how the Government can be made to work better for the people by consolidating similar or connected responsibilities under one Minister. This is seen very clearly in the amalgamation at Ministerial level of Business with Employment, of Transport with Traffic and of the Elderly with Health which used to be the responsibility of different Ministers before. The new Ministerial team will continue to deliver."

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said:

"This is now a Cabinet for the present and for the future. The reshuffle marks the Government's third year in office which has been a period of time during which we have implemented the majority of the pledges that were made in the GSLP/Liberal manifesto. We have taken our commitments very seriously. All Ministers will continue to devote the

same energy, enthusiasm and sheer hard work to their new tasks in hand as we did the minute we were elected in 2011. No Government is perfect and there is still plenty of work to be done. We will continue to strive to make Gibraltar a better place for everyone."