



PRESS RELEASE

No. 418/2015

Date: 18th June 2015

VERY POSITIVE FIRST CONTACT BETWEEN CHIEF MINISTER AND NEW MAYOR OF LA LINEA

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, wishes to thank publically the new Mayor of La Linea, Juan Franco Rodriguez, for his immediate solidarity on hearing of the accident suffered by a bus load of GFA supporters on their way home from Portugal after our European Qualifier with Germany.

The Mayor instantly contacted HMGOG to offer his support and concern over the incident and took the opportunity to express his strong desire to co-operate with HMGOG to better cross-border relations. Señor Franco confirmed to the Chief Minister he will personally assume control of the Ayuntamiento's dealings with Gibraltar. He expects to pay his first official visit to Gibraltar within the next couple of weeks.

For his part, the Chief Minister also expressed HMGOG's continued commitment to the improvement of relations between our two communities as an example to those further away who would wish to promote confrontation between us. Mr Picardo took the opportunity to congratulate Señor Franco on his becoming the new Mayor of La Linea.

Fabian Picardo said: "I have enjoyed an excellent personal and working relationship with Gemma Araujo during her time as Mayor of La Linea and want to wish her well for her future endeavours. She has always been a good friend of Gibraltar in all her dealing with us at a particularly difficult time. I have today spoken to the new Mayor of La Linea for the first time since he assumed his new post. He has been very kind in asking after the Gibraltarians who were injured in the accident at the weekend on their return from Faro. He was immediately involved in liaising with my office on that subject on Sunday as soon as he learnt of the accident. Today we have agreed that we are both on the same page in wanting to continue to foster strong relations between our two Cities, demonstrating the mutual value and benefit in co-operation instead of pursuing unnecessary and unproductive confrontation. I have agreed also with the Mayor to fix an early date to meet for further discussions. I fully expect this meeting will be something we can make a reality in coming weeks. I very much look forward therefore to continuing a close and positive relationship with the Ayuntamiento in La Linea in the common interest of Gibraltar and that city."