



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **A mistake by the Independent gives the Chief Minister a busy weekend**

A careless mistake by the online Independent newspaper in UK provided the Chief Minister with a very busy Bank Holiday weekend.

In an earlier TV interview with Sky News, Mr Picardo had made reference to Snr Margallo's demand for Gibraltar to consider Joint Sovereignty with Spain in the event of a vote to Leave at the EU referendum. However, in its report of the interview, the Independent wrongly attributed this remark to the Chief Minister himself and not to Snr Margallo, thus suggesting that it was Mr Picardo who was now calling for Joint Sovereignty. No other British newspaper misinterpreted the Chief Minister's words to Sky News in this way but most picked up the Independent's story without checking the original source. Meanwhile, in Spain, the story was already running in most of the country's media outlets.

Throughout Sunday morning, officials at No6 contacted each media outlet in turn to explain the cause of the error and to ask for offending articles to be removed. It was mid-afternoon before most of the inaccurate stories in online news pages in both UK and Spain were finally corrected.

Meanwhile, Mr Picardo was giving further telephone interviews so as to provide editors with an accurate version of events.

On Sunday evening, the Chief Minister said,

'It's incredible the nonsense that we have to put up with in Gibraltar.

Despite this careless reporting, we could not have been clearer throughout: we will never consider Snr Margallo's 'joint sovereignty' price for access to the Single Market - even if there were to be a Brexit majority in the referendum - or for any other price. There is no hope ever for Spain to achieve any advances on our sovereignty. I set out the position clearly in my Ministerial Statement explaining the unprecedented unity there is on the subject of the referendum. In fact, as I said four years ago at the UN, the Spanish Government needs to wake up and smell the coffee - Gibraltar will NEVER be Spanish. End of story. Brexit or Bremain, the British sovereignty of Gibraltar is not for sale and is not at risk. Full stop.'