



PRESS RELEASE

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Meeting with regional Spanish Trade Union leadership

The Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia this afternoon met with the regional representatives of the main Spanish trade unions in Andalucia. These were Paco Carbonero of CCOO and Carmen Castillo of UGT. A delegation from Unite was also present.

The Chief Minister made the point very clearly that freedom of movement through the border was just as important to the neighbouring region of Spain as it is to Gibraltar.

There were ten thousand people who live in Spain and work in Gibraltar, the majority of whom are Spanish or EU nationals.

Gibraltar, as a whole, is the second largest employer for the region of Andalucia, after the Junta, its regional Government.

Independent research produced for the Chamber of Commerce has shown that Gibraltar was responsible for generating 25% of the GDP (£847m) of the neighbouring region of Spain.

The Chief Minister told the Union leaders that Gibraltar wanted to continue its relationship with the European Union even in the event of a potential UK exit. This was the democratic mandate given to the Government by 96% of the voting electorate in Gibraltar.

Mr Picardo explained that in continuing to subject freedom of movement to joint-sovereignty the Spanish Foreign Minister was doing a huge disservice to the many thousands of cross-border Spanish workers and he was putting their jobs at risk. Joint-sovereignty is never going to happen.

The meeting was very positive and constructive. The Spanish Unions understood and shared the concerns expressed by Gibraltar and pledged to uphold the principle of freedom of movement for frontier workers, residents and tourists.