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Chief Minister meets new Foreign Secretary Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP & Toast: "British Gibraltar."

The Chief Minister of Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, met yesterday at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in London with the newly appointed Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP.

The meeting was held on a Saturday because the Chief Minister was en route to the British Overseas Territories pre-Joint Ministerial Conference which starts next week in Turks and Caicos.

This was not the first time that Mr Picardo and Mr Johnson had met, but it was the first time they had spoken since Mr Johnson was appointed as Foreign Secretary.

During the course of the very positive and convivial meeting, Mr Johnson expressed the continued, steadfast commitment of the United Kingdom Government to the "Double Lock" formula on the British Sovereignty of Gibraltar. The Foreign Secretary made clear he understands the issues relating to free movement which concern so many in Gibraltar, at a personal and business level, as well as Spanish and other workers who come into Gibraltar every day to work. Mr Johnson confirmed that he had queued to enter Gibraltar in his personal capacity in the past and understood the frustrations and concerns related to unnecessarily lengthy queues.

Mr Johnson transmitted a particular affection for Gibraltar, telling the Chief Minister, "I am a fan of Gibraltar. I much admire the place." He further assured the Chief Minister that he would be "unfailingly robust" on the Sovereignty of Gibraltar, adding that the United Kingdom will also "double our guard" on such issues.

The Chief Minister said: "This first contact with Mr Johnson in his capacity as Foreign Secretary has been very positive indeed. Having an early opportunity to explain all the present personal and economic concerns that we have in Gibraltar after the result of the UK Referendum has been very helpful indeed and will mean that Mr Johnson will have the benefit of our briefing for his meetings in Europe in coming days. I am sure that our engagement with the Foreign Secretary going forward will continue to be positive and favourable for Gibraltar."



The meeting ended with the Foreign Secretary toasting with all present to "British Gibraltar".