



Deputy Chief Minister

## PRESS RELEASE

No: 389/2016

Date: 21st July 2016

---

### **Gibraltar has a powerful story to tell about its Neanderthal past says Garcia**

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia this morning went on a site visit to Gorham's Cave, the first such visit since it became a World Heritage Site.

Dr Garcia was shown round by Professor Clive Finlayson, Dr Gerry Finlayson and Mr Marcello Sanguinetti.

The Deputy Chief Minister last visited Gorham's Cave in 2012, within a few months of taking office, in order to make an assessment of the requirements of the bid for World Heritage status. That visit resulted in a number of works at the cave and to the surrounding area, including cliff stabilisation works, repairs to the stairs and the balustrade, the laying of access paths to get to the cave and inside it, and the construction of a specialist metal staircase inside the cave itself in order to improve access from the lower to the upper levels.

Commenting on the matter, Dr Garcia said:

"I am delighted both as a member of the Government and as a historian that the Gorham's Cave complex has become a World Heritage site. This is a tribute to the hard work of many people over the years, particularly Professor Clive Finlayson, Dr Gerry Finlayson and their team. Gibraltar has a powerful story to tell as the last known outpost of the Neanderthals. It has been a pleasure for me to chair the Steering Committee that supervised the World Heritage bid and I also want to highlight the support that this project has received from the Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and the important contributions made by my colleagues the Minister for the Environment John Cortes, the Minister for Heritage Steven Linares and the Minister for Tourism Samantha Sacramento.

I have been very impressed with the improvements that the area has undergone since my last visit four years ago. There is still work to be done but we have made an impressive start. I am delighted that tours by sea to the caves are set to commence and that this includes visits by school-children under the summer activities programme. This is a working archaeological site so access has to be limited and very controlled in order to prevent damage. However, a viewing platform will be



provided at Europa Advance Battery which will permit tourists and residents to observe the last known home of the Neanderthals.”