



PRESS RELEASE

No: 536/2016

Date: 6th October 2016

No Way, Jose!

'Neither in 4 years or in 4,000 or any other longer time, the Spanish flag will never fly over Gibraltar. It's "No way, Jose", so get used to it!' - Picardo

The Government considers that it is deeply regrettable that the Caretaker Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia Margallo continues to embark on a policy of threats, open hostility and confrontation against Gibraltar as opposed to one of dialogue and cooperation.

The reality is that the decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union has absolutely nothing to do with the sovereignty of Gibraltar. Mr Margallo continues to link the two in a bare-faced attempt to take advantage of "Brexit" in order to advance Spain's outdated and invalid claim.

Spain lost Gibraltar in 1704 and ceded it in perpetuity in 1713, and Mr Margallo has evidently not come to terms with this loss over three hundred years later. The idea of redrawing the boundaries of Europe to what they were before 1713 is clearly absurd.

Moreover, the principles of the eighteenth century cannot be applied to a situation that exists in the twenty-first century. In this day and age the very concept that a people, however small, can be handed over from one monarch to another against their wishes is something that should be anathema to anyone who calls himself a democrat.

The right of self-determination, where people decide their own future freely and democratically, is the way forward for Gibraltar and Mr Margallo has to learn to accept that. Moreover, history has shown that the people of Gibraltar will not respond to threats.

Gibraltar employs thousands of Spanish nationals, contributes one quarter of the GDP of the area and is the second largest employer for Andalucia. The economic benefits that Mr Margallo has described in a shared-sovereignty framework could accrue today from a normal, cross-border friendly relationship. In other words, there is no need for shared-sovereignty in order to have normality. This could happen overnight if Mr Margallo gave up his obsession with Gibraltar and allowed the people on both sides of the border to get on with their lives.

Importantly, the "unblocking of EU legislation" which the Spanish Ambassador told the United Nations could occur if Gibraltar accepted Joint Sovereignty is only blocked because Snr Margallo's Partido Popular undid the Cordoba Accords. It is up to the Spanish



Government to unblock the relevant EU legislation immediately and comply with its EU obligations even now.

Commenting on the matter the Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC, said:

“Gibraltar will never be Spanish, neither in 4 years, in 40 years, in 400 years or in 4,000 years or in any other longer time frame. Never means Never. No means No. Brexit changes nothing.

“What we need to do is agree that the frontier will continue to flow freely so that we can continue to be the economy that provides jobs for 12,000 people (7,000 of them Spanish) who come here to earn their living. The threats Snr Margallo makes of closing frontiers belong in the time of the cold war and not in modern Europe.

“Mr Margallo is creating castles in the sky and avoiding the real issues that need to be dealt with.

“All of the fantastic prosperity and unblocking of legislation which Spain says can flow only from Joint Sovereignty can actually flow today. It is only the attitude of the Partido Popular that has resulted in the undoing of Cordoba Accords that is giving rise to EU legislation being blocked. We have already done an agreement in that respect in 2006 which Snr Margallo is failing to comply with. Now he expects us to give up our homes just to get him to comply with the agreements already done.

“As in so many other aspects of Spanish diplomacy, Snr Margallo gets it wrong with Gibraltar and with the Gibraltarians. Threats don't work with us. They never have. Sweeteners won't work either. It's not about carrots or sticks. It's about respect. Respect for our inalienable right to self-determination. Respect for the choice we have already made to remain British. And, of course, respect for the fact that this is our land and nobody else's.

“I have already told Snr Jose Manuel Garcia Margallo at the United Nations that it's "No way, Jose" to his proposal.

“The people of Gibraltar have seen off a long line of Spanish Foreign Ministers who have all engaged in a quest to recover Spanish Sovereignty over Gibraltar. Mr Margallo will simply be another one in a long list. His policies of coercion, of threats and of confrontation will do little more than cement perpetual British sovereignty over the Rock. For that reason, we do wish that he stays in post for as long as possible.

“Meanwhile, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar stands ready to work with serious interlocutors on what a future, mutually beneficial participation for Gibraltar with Europe will be in a post Brexit world. We are working hard already on this with the UK Government and are fully involved in preparations being made by the UK in the run-up to the triggering of Article 50. For those who live in Spain and work in Gibraltar, for those who visit Gibraltar regularly and for families which are spread across the frontier, I say this: the Government of Gibraltar will never be the one that puts up barriers to free movement; we will never threaten your ability to move across the frontier; we will never threaten your ability to do business across the frontier; or to see friends or relatives on either side of the frontier. But we will never pay a Sovereignty price for anything. Those who put a Sovereignty price tag on benefits, prosperity or any other right or advantage do so knowing that it is a price we will never pay, however attractive they may think the carrot they are dangling before us might



be. We owe it to our ancestors, to ourselves and to our descendants to remain steadfast on this fundamental issue and we will never waiver.”