



Deputy Chief Minister

PRESS RELEASE

No: 662/2016

Date: 28th November 2016

Gibraltar and Wales Explore Common Challenges of Brexit

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia this afternoon presented the First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones AM with a glass cut model of the Rock, during a working lunch between the Welsh Government and the visiting Gibraltar Government delegation in Cardiff. Due to an unexpected family medical emergency, the Chief Minister was unable to travel to Wales at the last minute and remains in Gibraltar.

The First Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister held informative and friendly discussions on the potential impact of the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union on Wales and on Gibraltar. Possible areas for cooperation were also discussed between the two delegations at the Welsh Government offices in Cathays Park.

The Gibraltar delegation included the Attorney General Michael Llamas, UK Representative Dominique Searle and PPS to the Chief Minister Peter Canessa. The Welsh Government delegation included the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, the Counsel General, the PPS to the First Minister and the Deputy Director General for Constitutional Affairs and Inter-Governmental Relations.

The question of borders, which had featured prominently in discussions of the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly (BIPA) that morning, was one of the topics discussed.

Indeed, in the opening address to the Assembly earlier that morning, the First Minister had explained the importance of travel between Wales and Ireland given the ferry links between the two countries. The impact on the Northern Ireland border was also raised extensively by Members of Parliament from Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

In this context, Liberal Democrat peer Baroness Harris of Richmond, raised during the plenary session the future impact on the land border between Gibraltar and Spain in questions to Robin Walker, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department for Exiting the European Union.

In response, Mr Walker spoke of the commitment to Gibraltar being as solid as the Rock. He recalled that the very first debate as a Minister that he had in the UK Parliament was about



Gibraltar added that the UK Government absolutely stood by decision of the people of Gibraltar to be British and their choice to be part of a common market with the United Kingdom. Mr Walker added that the will of the people of Gibraltar in rejecting shared sovereignty had to be respected and they would not allow the Brexit process to be used to bring back such an approach which had already been rejected. He also commented on the close working relationship between the U.K. and Gibraltar Governments which has helped to achieve a better understanding of the challenges going forward.

The discussions during the meeting with the Welsh Government, and indeed during the Parliamentary Assembly, centred on Brexit issues.

The Gibraltar delegation will be attending a reception at the National Assembly of Wales and, in the absence of the Chief Minister, tonight the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia will deliver an address to delegates during an official dinner in Cardiff Castle.