



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **We need a "sensible Brexit" Garcia tells British and Irish Parliamentarians**

In an address to delegates at the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly in Cardiff, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia has said that instead of a "hard Brexit" or a "soft Brexit" what was required was a "sensible, well managed and orderly Brexit" which was in the best interests not only of Gibraltar and Spain but also of the United Kingdom and the European Union as a whole.

Dr Garcia delivered the keynote address to the official dinner of the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly in Cardiff Castle. The Assembly consists of Parliamentarians from the House of Commons, House of Lords, the Irish Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

He told the Parliamentarians that although 96% of Gibraltar had voted to remain in the European Union, the overall result was to leave. "We are where we are and we have to deal with it," he declared.

He explained that many people have come to regard the application of EU law at the border as providing a degree of protection against the excesses of a difficult neighbour and went over the importance to both sides of fluid land access between Gibraltar and Spain.

The address, which was very well received, echoed the concerns that had been raised during the day about the future movement of persons between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland after Brexit. Dr Garcia drew a parallel between the two situations on the basis that there were 14,800 people who crossed daily from south to north in order to work. "Similarly there are over 12,000 persons, most of whom are Spanish, who cross the border into Gibraltar every morning and then leave after work in the evening", he explained.

The economies of the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and the Republic were intertwined in the same way as the economies of the Campo and Andalucia were linked to that of Gibraltar. This access to and from Gibraltar is particularly important for frontier workers and for the tourists who create the jobs that the frontier workers then occupy.

The Deputy Chief Minister went over the constitutional position of Gibraltar which he said enjoyed in internal UK terms "Devo Max", more self-Government than any of the devolved administrations. He welcomed the very positive level of engagement with the United Kingdom Government which was apparent from the number of high-level meetings that had taken place with different members of the Government from the Prime Minister downwards.



Dr Garcia closed by raising the question of a differentiated relationship between members of the British family of nations and the European Union post-Brexit. He said that this multi-faceted relationship is what existed at present with Gibraltar, Scotland, Jersey and the Falklands, for example, each enjoying a different degree of participation with the EU.