



PRESS RELEASE

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Chief Minister receives welcome explanation from Baroness Jolly

The Chief Minister has this afternoon received a letter from Baroness Judith Jolly following her negative comment about Gibraltar in the House of Lords earlier this month.

Baroness Jolly has explained that she recognises “that Gibraltar, as part of the EU, cannot fairly be grouped together with the Virgin Islands or Liechtenstein in matters of tax policy; and that Gibraltar abides by EU legislation in the areas referred to.” She has explained that as an Opposition Member with no civil servants or staff to assist in the preparation of speeches, she has to rely in part on material published by NGOs.

The Baroness has added that she regrets that the words she used in the debate in the House of Lords have been seized upon by Spanish journalists and politicians and used as a stick with which to beat Gibraltar, which was not her intention.

The Chief Minister Fabian Picardo said:

“The Government welcomes the genuine explanation given by Baroness Jolly in particular that Gibraltar, as part of the European Union, abides by EU legislation in this area. We intend to meet with her and to invite her to Gibraltar in order to provide a first-hand understanding of how we operate and look forward to working closely with her in the future.”

The full text of the letter is as follows:

The Hon Fabian Picardo QC, MP

6 Convent Place

GIBRALTAR

Dear Chief Minister,

It is with regret that I learn that words I used in a debate in the House on my proposal for a register for arms dealers have been seized upon excitedly by Spanish journalists and certain politicians and used as a stick with which to beat Gibraltar in pursuit of Spain's sovereignty claim. This was not my intention.

As an opposition Member I have no civil servants or staff to assist in the preparation of speeches and so rely in part on material published by NGOs. I do recognise that Gibraltar, as part of the EU, cannot fairly be grouped together with the Virgin Islands or Liechtenstein in matters of tax policy; and that Gibraltar abides by EU legislation in the areas referred to.



I regret any harm to Gibraltar which my words might have caused.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Jolly