



Deputy Chief Minister

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Government Corrects Misinformation Propagated by Spanish MEP

The Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for European Affairs, Dr Joseph Garcia, has written to the European Commission in order to set the record straight following misinformation about Gibraltar propagated by a Spanish MEP.

It will be recalled that in a question to the European Parliament on 24 February 2016 set by the Spanish MEP, Mr Ramon Jauregui Atondo, he alleged that Gibraltar facilitates tax evasion and financial crime. In response to these allegations, the Government has written to the European Commission setting out, in factual terms once more, Gibraltar's unflinching position on tax evasion and other financial crime.

This is the second time that this same Spanish MEP raises anti-Gibraltar propaganda in Brussels in a manner which has nothing to do with reality and everything to do with giving the wrong impression about our country to the European Union.

In the letter to the Commission, the Deputy Chief Minister highlights – amongst other things – that:

- Gibraltar has international exchange of information agreements with some 80 countries including Spain.
- Gibraltar received a glowing review from the OECD on our record on exchange of information and transparency.
- Tax evasion is a very serious criminal offence and is also an indictable offence for money laundering purposes.
- The Gibraltar Financial Intelligence Unit sends information, on request and on a spontaneous basis, to all countries in the Egmont Group of Financial Units. This includes Spain.
- All EU measures on financial supervision and regulation, exchange of information on direct taxation and the fight against money laundering are in force in Gibraltar and the European Commission has recognised Gibraltar's full compliance with EU obligations in all these areas.
- Gibraltar has enacted legislation for the automatic exchange of detailed tax information with the United States, the United Kingdom and all EU Member States. This includes Spain.



Legislation for automatic exchange with a further 70 countries or so will be enacted shortly.

Commenting on the matter, the Deputy Chief Minister, the Hon Dr Joseph Garcia, said: “It is difficult to see what else this gentleman expects Gibraltar to do, and his question must be seen for what it is – an ignorant and unsubstantiated attempt to discredit and cause harm to Gibraltar. Our record in the transposition of European Union law and in adhering to the highest international standards has been independently verified and is second to none. The Government will not allow his ridiculous claims to go by unchallenged and we have already written to the Commission in order to set the record straight”.