

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Further Assurances to Gibraltar from Prime Minister May Contrary to Spain & Eu's Position**

The Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister have been in direct contact overnight with UK Ministers, officials and Members of Parliament on the anticipated publication of the European Union's Recommendations for a Council Decision earlier today.

The Government therefore welcome the assurances given by the Prime Minister to the House of Commons, on Monday and today, about the inclusion of Gibraltar in the negotiations for both the transitional period and the future agreement as we prepare to leave the European Union.

The Prime Minister gave these assurances both before and after the publication by the Commission of the new Recommendation for an EU Council Decision which set out their proposed negotiating directives for this new phase of the process.

The assurance today from the Prime Minister in relation to the negotiation must be read in conjunction with both the previous assurances as to the outcome of the negotiations contained in: (a) the unequivocal commitment given by Secretary of State David Davis, to the Chief Minister in April, that the UK 'will not do the deal' with the EU on future trade if it does not include Gibraltar; and (b) the Prime Minister's own assurances on National Day this year to 'safeguard the Rock, its people and its economy'.

Taken together, these assurances are a demonstration of the strength of the support for Gibraltar from the current British Government and all parties in the United Kingdom Parliament.

The directives relating to the transition are pending further discussion and adoption by the Council itself in January. The directives relating to the framework for a future relationship are up for further discussion and adoption in March.

The new negotiating directives restate Clause 24 of the April guidelines which say that after the United Kingdom has left the European Union, the application of any agreement to Gibraltar has to be agreed between the United Kingdom and Spain first. This purported to give Spain a veto over the application to Gibraltar of any agreement concluded after the United Kingdom is out of the EU.

The Deputy Chief Minister, Joseph Garcia, said: "The Government of Gibraltar is not surprised by the reference to this clause in the documents which have been published today. It will be recalled



that Spain originally intended that this clause should be applied to the Withdrawal Agreement as well, but that did not transpire. However, the negative motivation and outright bad faith that Madrid has shown by seeking a veto over the application of the transition agreement to Gibraltar is unfortunately characteristic. Spain has absolutely nothing to gain by this. Current and future Spanish workers have nothing to gain by this and the uncertainty created by THEIR government as a result. Indeed, the European Union itself have nothing to gain by this. All that they have done is slap in the face a small community that voted by 96% to remain in the European Union. Moreover, the purported veto is not even in the interests of Spain itself or of the many thousands of Spanish and other EU nationals who live in Spain and work in Gibraltar. The position of the Government is that a transitional period which largely extends the existing relationship of the Member State United Kingdom until the end of 2020 should similarly extend the existing relationship of Gibraltar with the EU until that time. We will continue to work with the United Kingdom to secure a Brexit that works for Gibraltar and for all sectors of our community and all nationalities represented in our labour market, despite Spain's predatory attitude."