



Deputy Chief Minister

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Garcia puts Across Gibraltar View to UK Ministers and Opposition**

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia has continued with a busy round of meetings in London in order to put across the position of Gibraltar to relevant Ministers and Opposition Members appointed after the UK general election.

Dr Garcia discussed aviation issues, as they affect Gibraltar, with the new UK Minister responsible for aviation at the Department for Transport, Lord Callanan. Dr Garcia explained the historical background to the problems created for Gibraltar in the field of civil aviation in the European Union. He outlined the importance of the United Kingdom Government maintaining its red lines in this area and explained the policy of the Gibraltar Government going forward. Dr Garcia made the point that 2016 had been a record year for Gibraltar Airport in terms of passenger numbers and said that it was important to protect the position in the future.

This meeting took place in the presence of Robin Walker MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Department for Exiting the European Union.

The Deputy Chief Minister then had the opportunity to discuss border issues with the new UK Minister of State for Immigration, Brandon Lewis MP. He explained the importance of a frictionless frontier to Gibraltar post-Brexit and highlighted that this was significant in respect of residents on both sides of the border, frontier-workers and tourists. Dr Garcia outlined a number of potential solutions which the Government had looked at in this respect.

The Deputy Chief Minister was then able to brief the Shadow Minister for Europe Khalid Mahmood MP on the challenges that Gibraltar faced as it prepared to leave the European Union together with the United Kingdom. He again went over the border issues and outlined the importance of access to the UK market among other matters.

Commenting on the latest meetings in London, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said: "I took advantage of the meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee on Brexit to arrange other meetings in London at the same time. There is considerable sympathy and support for Gibraltar among UK Ministers and among Members of Parliament of all political colours. This will be very useful going forward as the discussions progress. The Government intends to continue with this information campaign in order to ensure that its point of view reaches as wide a cross-section of MPs as possible."