



PRESS RELEASE

No: 763/2017

Date: 19th December 2017

High Commissioner of Australia to the United Kingdom Visits the Rock

This week Gibraltar welcomed the High Commissioner of Australia to the United Kingdom, His Excellency the Hon Alexander Downer, to the Rock on a fact-finding visit. The Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Joseph Garcia, had previously met with Mr Downer when in London in September. The High Commissioner's visit to Gibraltar included a number of briefings and working meetings on a wide range of subjects, including Brexit, future trade and the economy.

On Monday night the Deputy Chief Minister addressed His Excellency at an official dinner, where other guests included the Chief Justice, Ministers, Opposition Members and representatives of the Financial Services and Online Gaming sectors. The Australian expat community in Gibraltar was also invited. Dr Garcia's speech covered the themes of Gibraltar's history and strategic military importance from the Battle of Trafalgar to today, Australia's support for Gibraltar at the United Nations throughout the 1960s and for the first sovereignty Referendum of 1967, and Gibraltar's economy, in particular the importance of Gibraltar's respected and growing financial services centre and expertise in online gaming.

Gibraltar is gearing up for a post-Brexit future, and it is only natural that we want to do business with those countries that share our core values. Australia, a respected fellow member of the Commonwealth shares our commitment to fairness, democracy, human rights, to standing up for the underdog, to freedom and justice, and to self-determination, said Dr Garcia.

Visits such as this one are invaluable for building relationships, identifying mutual interests and exploring ways to work more closely together in the future.

The Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Joseph Garcia, said: 'I was delighted to welcome the High Commissioner to Gibraltar, following our first meeting in London in September. Gibraltar and Australia share the same core values and have many mutual interests, given our close relationship with the United Kingdom and with the Commonwealth. We look forward to developing a long-lasting and meaningful relationship between us as we prepare to leave the European Union.'