



PRESS RELEASE

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Gibraltar to participate at high-profile Commonwealth events in London

Gibraltar will be represented at a series of events around the Commonwealth Heads of Government summit which takes place in London next month.

The summit will run for five days from 16 to 20 April under the theme “Towards a Common Future”. It is expected to include many Heads of Government and Foreign Ministers from the member states of the Commonwealth.

The summit will open with three days of parallel forums on Business, Women, People and Youth which 2000 delegates from across the Commonwealth are expected to attend. These forums will take place at the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre and the Guildhall and will provide an opportunity for dialogue and discussion between different parts of the Commonwealth family as well as a platform for debate of the key themes and challenges. The four groups will come together at the end during a Joint-Forum day.

It is expected that Gibraltar will participate in all four groups. This participation has been put together through the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia, who is coordinating relations with the Commonwealth, and the Gibraltar Office in London. It follows a meeting between Dr Garcia and the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Baroness Scotland earlier this year and a further meeting with the UK Minister of State responsible for the Commonwealth Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon.

The Commonwealth Business Forum, which is organised by the Commonwealth Business and Investment Council, will provide a platform for discussion between Commonwealth Governments and business leaders. The Government of Gibraltar has become an Institutional Strategic Partner of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council as part of the preparations for the event, which will open the door to a network of connections within the organisation in order to promote business and investment opportunities. The Minister for Commerce Albert Isola along with the Finance Centre Director are planning to attend this event. There will be discussions on matters which are very relevant to Gibraltar like “Developing the Digital Economy”, “Trade without Frontiers: Technology for Trade Facilitation”, Financial Regulation, “Fintech and Innovation in Financial Services” and Cybersecurity.

The Minister for Housing and Equality Samantha Sacramento intends to participate in the Commonwealth Women’s Forum. This will take place under the theme “An empowered future for



women and girls” and will cover areas such as “Women in leadership”, “Gender parity in Education”, “Ending violence against women and girls and “Women, peace and security”. The organisers have said that the purpose of this forum is to affirm high-level support and direct top-level policies for gender equality and women’s rights, for women to be given the opportunity to interact with leaders and for the Commonwealth’s commitments to gender equality to be positioned high on the agenda for Heads of Government. Minister Sacramento is on the British Islands and Mediterranean Region Steering Committee of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians and also chairs a working group examining the role of the Parliaments of the region.

A People’s Forum, involving civic society, will also be one of the events around the Heads of Government meeting. Given the civic society nature of the event, the Mayor of Gibraltar Mrs Kaiane Aldorino-Lopez is expected to attend this forum. There will be discussions on issues affecting civic society like migration, development, exclusion, taking on injustice, a call to action for civic voices and women negotiating peace. More than 350 delegates from all over the Commonwealth are expected to attend the People’s Forum which the organisers have said brings a civic perspective to the debate under the central theme of “Inclusive Governance: The Challenge for a Contemporary Commonwealth”.

Two young Gibraltarians, Tammy Randall and Jared Peralta, have been nominated to attend the Commonwealth Youth Forum. They were selected from among those Gibraltarians who participated in the internship programme in Washington and who subsequently expressed an interest in further engagement in events of this nature. They will debate questions like “Enhancing sustainability in the Commonwealth”, “The Future of Work-Skilling Tomorrow’s Economy” and “Inclusion – The future we want! Fairness, Equality and Justice for all”. The theme of the 2018 Youth Forum is “Powering our common future” and the aim is to illustrate the potential of young people to devise solutions to complex global challenges and their ability to make recommendations to the Heads of Government meeting.

Commenting on the event, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said:

“This represents the single most powerful engagement of this kind that Gibraltar has ever had with the Commonwealth at different levels. It follows on from the policy of the Government to increase our interaction with the Commonwealth as we prepare to leave the European Union. The event will open as the Commonwealth Games, in which Gibraltar is also represented, come to a close. It has taken considerable hard work and coordination on the part of my office and Gibraltar House in London to draw the different strands together and I am very grateful to all those who have assisted. The presence of Gibraltarians in the Business, Women’s, People’s and Youth Forums will allow the Gibraltar perspective to emerge in the discussions. There are some areas where Gibraltar has a positive story to tell and where we are world leaders. There are other areas where we can learn from the experiences of different countries and seek to adapt their solutions locally. This engagement with the Commonwealth can only be a positive and constructive experience.”