



Deputy Chief Minister

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Garcia Says That Gibraltar Will Never Surrender Its Birthright**

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia has reminded members of the Gibraltar-American Council that 2019 will mark fifty years since the closure of the land frontier between Gibraltar and Spain by General Franco. The lesson of those years is that the people of Gibraltar will never surrender their birthright no matter the amount of political pressure that was placed on them.

Dr Garcia was speaking at the same time as the Chief Minister Fabian Picardo attended a different event organised by the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations.

In his address to the Council, Dr Garcia updated its members on the latest political developments affecting Gibraltar since their last meeting in October.

He went over events at the United Nations the previous day including the speeches delivered by the Chief Minister and the Representative of Spain. The people of Gibraltar would never give up their sovereignty or their right to self-determination but were willing to have positive engagement with the new Spanish Government in Madrid about practical matters of cooperation.

Dr Garcia also gave a detailed Brexit briefing to Council Members. There has been considerable interest in this. He explained that as the UK and Gibraltar prepare to leave the European Union, there had been engagement with Member States across a whole range of issues, including Gibraltar. It was in everybody's interests to ensure that the concerns and interests of citizens on both sides were put first.

The Deputy Chief Minister described the engagement with members of Congress and others in Washington. He went over the latest visit there last month and gave details of the twenty-six meetings held during his latest visit there.

Dr Garcia said that a resolution before Congress by Congressman George Holding which supported our right to self-determination had started with 6 signatories and now had 47. This was balanced between Republicans and Democrats. He revealed that co-sponsors included the Chair of the Homeland Security Committee, the Chair of the Armed Services Committee and the Chair of the Intelligence Committee.

The schedule of meetings continued into the afternoon.