



PRESS RELEASE

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PM meets CM and Gibraltar Brexit Team / UK-Gibraltar relations have never been better

The Prime Minister Theresa May MP and Cabinet Office Minister David Lidington MP this evening met Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia in Downing Street. The Gibraltar delegation included Attorney General Michael Llamas and Financial Secretary Albert Mena.

The meeting marks the end of the second phase of negotiations to leave the European Union that the Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar had identified and embarked upon as far back as September 2016.

The first phase for Gibraltar was the conclusion of a series of UK-Gibraltar agreements to safeguard market access and other matters. This was achieved earlier this year as a result of work done in the Joint Ministerial Council (Gibraltar Exit from the European Union).

This second phase, which is about to come to a close, was Gibraltar's inclusion in the Withdrawal Agreement, including the transitional period, which currently runs until the end of 2020. This has required engagement with EU and Spanish negotiating teams.

The third phase are the negotiations on the future relationship between the UK and the EU, including that of Gibraltar. This is expected to open when and if the agreement on Withdrawal is formally approved and ratified.

The Government of Gibraltar is ready for such discussions on our future relationship with the EU.

The meeting with the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street today provided an opportunity to discuss and review the draft Withdrawal Agreement, including its transitional period, and its application to Gibraltar. In particular, the conclusion of a Protocol on Gibraltar, that forms an integral part of the Agreement and will provide certainty to citizens and businesses in Gibraltar and the surrounding area, was welcomed.

The documentation that will emerge as a consequence of this was also generally considered.



The Prime Minister and Chief Minister have approved the implementation of these agreements in line with the established constitutional relationship that the UK and Gibraltar enjoy and which is embodied in the 2006 Gibraltar Constitution.

The meeting today also provided an opportunity for a general discussion.

The Chief Minister, who has led on these negotiations for Gibraltar, was able to thank the Prime Minister and David Lidington for their solid support throughout this process, as well as the support of Ministers Duncan and Walker and the official teams from all relevant UK departments.

It is a mark of this support that Mrs May first met Mr Picardo in 2016 a few hours before she was due to meet HM the Queen to be appointed Prime Minister. The meeting today came straight after the UK Cabinet discussion on the agreement. This once again highlights the important degree of commitment to Gibraltar and the fact that relations between the Gibraltar and UK Governments have never been better.

It is relevant also to note that the Gibraltar Cabinet has also been briefed on the latest developments, as has the Brexit Select Committee of the Gibraltar Parliament and, separately, the Leader of the GSD. All have been shown the latest versions of the documentation.

The Chief Minister said:

“The meeting with Prime Minister May, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster David Lidington and Sir Alan Duncan, Minister for Europe and the Americas was warm and positive. At important and key moments of her premiership, Mrs May has made time for Gibraltar. She saw me, the Deputy Chief Minister and the Attorney General on the very day of her appointment. She saw me on the first day of her recent party conference. She has seen us today, the very day of her statement to Parliament and after the most important Cabinet meeting for many years. Mrs May's deep commitment to Gibraltar has never been in doubt. Today the Prime Minister and I welcomed the Protocol on Gibraltar which will give confidence and certainty to individuals and businesses operating in Gibraltar. We have agreed that we are confident that the UK, Gibraltar and Spain are now well placed to rapidly conclude Memoranda of Understanding that will address areas of mutual interest and enhance cooperation on citizen's rights, tobacco, the environment, and police and customs matters, and to agree to conclude a treaty on tax transparency and information exchange. It is clear to me that all parties can and should now move forward in a spirit of dialogue and cooperation to enhance the security and prosperity of Gibraltar and the entire surrounding area.”