



PRESS RELEASE

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Gibraltar will never forgive Opposition's divisive approach to "Brexit"

The latest statement by the Opposition in relation to the Government's approach to "Brexit" suggests that they are living on a different planet to the rest of us.

It is clear to practically everyone that the Government have taken the initiative and have led from the front on this issue. It does not say much for the Opposition that they should once again seek to create uncertainty and sow division in our country on this serious matter as well. Gibraltar will never forgive them.

It will be recalled that soon after the referendum result became known, the Government lost no time in meeting the key players in London. This included the Prime Minister Theresa May (on the day that she was appointed), Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU David Davis and the Minister for Europe Alan Duncan. The Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia also engaged with the First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon.

Therefore in the short time since the referendum result, the Government has briefed major players in all political parties in the United Kingdom. This year special advantage has been taken of Gibraltar's participation in the conferences of the main UK political parties in order to drive home Gibraltar's concerns. The Chief Minister addressed members of the UK Cabinet directly during the Conservative Party conference and the Deputy Chief Minister was given special permission to address the plenary at the Liberal Democrat conference.

There have been weeks of intense consultation across all Gibraltar Government departments and agencies in relation to the impact of "Brexit" across every sphere of Government activity. The private sector has also been closely involved in that same process which has been spearheaded by the Deputy Chief Minister and the Attorney General. This process is essential in order to determine the precise impact of "Brexit" with facts as figures as opposed to with the vague generalisations that the Opposition have us accustomed to.

It is the conclusions of that Study that will chart the way forward with the United Kingdom. The Devolved Administrations, the Crown Dependencies and the Overseas Territories are engaged in the same process. Indeed, to proceed without the facts and figures would be to put the cart before the horse.

It is absurd that the Opposition should be critical of the Government in the light of the intense activity that has already taken place. They are simply criticising the Government for the sake of it when, quite clearly, they have no alternative plan of their own and nothing else to offer. It is the Opposition that inspire no confidence on this and on every other issue that they touch.

Moreover, the Opposition do not seem to be aware that even in the United Kingdom itself, the Select Committee on "Brexit" has yet to be established!



In addition to all this, the Government has been quick to take Gibraltar's position directly to other Member States of the European Union, and to key players in Brussels and elsewhere. Given the sensitivities involved, much of this work continues to be confidential for obvious reasons.

In this context, what the Government will not do is to provide a blow-by-blow account of its activities when we believe that the disclosure of such information could damage the wider interests of Gibraltar. The Opposition should quite simply stop playing politics with "Brexit".