



Deputy Chief Minister

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Brexit risks leaving Gibraltar at the mercy of Spain**

In an address to Year 12 students from Bayside and Westside Schools, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia has said that there was a risk that exit from the European Union would leave Gibraltar politically exposed and at the mercy of Spain. Dr Garcia made these comments following a presentation made by students who had attended a visit to the EU institutions in Brussels last year organised by the Gibraltar in Europe Group.

The Deputy Chief Minister, who is also the Minister for European Affairs, recalled the positive impact of his first visit to Brussels with Chief Minister Fabian Picardo some twenty years ago, as young people who had just finished their studies, and he explained how this spurred on the policy, now in Government, of encouraging other young people to go there as well.

Dr Garcia said that the next group of students, who are due to visit Brussels in September, will do so after the Referendum of 23rd June has taken place. This will determine whether the United Kingdom and Gibraltar will remain in the EU or will leave. "This means that when the next group goes to Brussels we will either continue in the European Union under the terms negotiated by the Prime Minister or we will be negotiating our exit. It is as stark as that," he said.

Dr Garcia explained the difficulties that could arise at the border if Gibraltar were outside the EU and he stressed the importance of the Single Market for businesses in Gibraltar. There were other positive gains for Gibraltar like EU Funding over many years, the EU format identity card which served as a travel document and the EU health card which allowed access to healthcare in other parts of Europe when travelling there.

The Deputy Chief Minister explained that the position of the Government, and indeed of the Parliament of Gibraltar and of all the political parties in Gibraltar, is that our future lies inside the European Union.