



## PRESS RELEASE

No: 210/2017

Date: 31st March 2017

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### **HM Government of Gibraltar's Statement on European Council Draft Guidelines**

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar notes the reference to Gibraltar in the draft Guidelines published by the European Council today.

Issues related to Gibraltar's continued access to the UK market and access to trade deals with the rest of the world are outside the scope of the final negotiating parameters which will be established by the EU Council by the end of April.

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar will continue its work on Brexit matters on the lines we have already established. The exit negotiations clearly include Gibraltar despite Spain's attempts to also have Gibraltar excluded from them.

Gibraltar has shamefully been singled out, however, for unfavourable treatment by the Council, at the behest of Spain, in these draft guidelines in respect of the second agreement on the future between the UK and the EU.

The Chief Minister of Gibraltar, Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, said: "This unnecessary, unjustified and unacceptable discriminatory proposed singling out of Gibraltar and its people was the predictable machination of Spain that the people of Gibraltar foresaw and one of the reasons why we voted so massively to remain in the EU. Gibraltar's record as a member of the EU is an exemplary one and our people enthusiastically supported continued membership of the EU in the referendum. Yet this draft suggests that Spain is trying to get away with mortgaging the future relationship between the EU and Gibraltar to its usual obsession with our homeland. This is a



disgraceful attempt by Spain to manipulate the European Council for its own, narrow, political interests. Brexit is already complicated enough without Spain trying to complicate it further.

“What we are seeing is a clear manifestation of the predictably predatory attitude that we anticipated Spain would seek to abusively impose on its partners, as they have been threatening to do since the referendum took place and as the only member of the EU with an obsession with Gibraltar. This will surprise no-one. Spain has been holding the whole EU to ransom on aviation matters for the past five years in respect of Gibraltar airport. The whole world and the whole EU should know: this changes nothing in respect of our continued, exclusive British Sovereignty. The fact is that during and beyond the Brexit process, Gibraltar will continue to grow and prosper economically and will, paradoxically, provide wealth for the whole Spanish region around us.”

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