



PRESS RELEASE

No: 217/2017

Date: 5th April 2017

DIRECT ASSURANCES FROM RT HON DAVID DAVIS MP, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEXEU

The Chief Minister has held various telephone conversations in the past three days with the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, the Rt Hon David Davis MP.

In the course of those conversations, Mr Davis has confidentially but very helpfully and very fully briefed the Chief Minister on the content of his discussion with Spanish counterparts during the course of his visit to Madrid last Sunday/Monday. The Chief Minister will disclose no further details in respect of that part of those conversations.

The Chief Minister was satisfied with the position set out by the Secretary of State for the Her Majesty's Government of the United Kingdom in the context of the Art 50 process and the draft guidelines which the European Council has recently published.

The telephone conversations with Mr Davis are further to those held with the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Theresa May MP and the Foreign Secretary, Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP.

Both Mrs May and Mr Johnson were entirely supportive of Gibraltar's position in their conversations with Mr Picardo and pledged to defend and protect not just Gibraltar's sovereignty, but also its economic well being.

Mr Picardo has also been fully reassured by Mr Davis that the United Kingdom will not do new agreements with the EU that may be relevant to Gibraltar if the Spanish Government try to exclude Gibraltar from the application of those agreements.

Mr Davis has also explicitly stated that the interests of Gibraltar will be protected in the context of the negotiations.

The Chief Minister said: "I have had very positive contacts with Secretary of State Davis in the past seventy-two hours. He is clearly a strong supporter of Gibraltar, having been Minister for Europe, and not a man who is going to allow himself to be bullied into accepting inferior treatment for Gibraltar in the context of the negotiations to come. The interests of Gibraltar, as determined by Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is concerned, are that the Spanish Government should not



be allowed to get away with discriminatory treatment against Gibraltar, or with double vetos in respect of the application of new UK/EU agreements to Gibraltar. Such “second bites at the cherry” are entirely unacceptable. Mr Davis has, in fact, also told the UK Parliament that he wants to deliver for the UK “the exact same benefits” in respect of future agreements with the European Union as the UK, and therefore Gibraltar, enjoy today. I applaud and support his ambitions for Britain and Gibraltar in this respect. I am therefore confident that with Mr Davis’ assertion to me that the UK will not agree to future agreements that exclude Gibraltar, we will be able also to enjoy those “exact same benefits” in Gibraltar in the future. In that respect, the clause inserted by Spain into the draft EU guidelines may, if it endures in its current form beyond the 29th April, yet make the Spanish Government a hostage of its own attempts to abuse its position in respect of Gibraltar.”

ENDS