

PRESS RELEASE

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Meeting with EU Deputy Chief Negotiator in Brussels

The Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia, this morning met in Brussels with Sabine Weyand the EU Deputy Chief Negotiator on Brexit. The Gibraltar delegation also included the Attorney General Michael Llamas as well as Sir Graham Watson and Daniel D'Amato from Gibraltar House in Brussels.

Mr Picardo and Dr Garcia arrived in Brussels very late last night straight from a meeting of the Gibraltar Parliament.

This morning the EU negotiators had met with the First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon, with the First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones and with UK Opposition Leader Jeremy Corbyn and their teams. Mr Picardo had the opportunity to also speak with Jeremy Corbyn between their respective meetings with the EU negotiating team.

In his meeting with Sabine Weyand, the Chief Minister pointed out that 96% of Gibraltar had voted to remain in the European Union, although we had now come to terms with the fact that we were leaving together with the United Kingdom given the overall result of the referendum. He said that Gibraltar continued to comply with the rules of the European Union and should not be discriminated against going forward.

Mr Picardo explained the priorities for Gibraltar in the coming negotiations between the EU and the UK. He covered in some detail the importance of a frictionless land frontier between Gibraltar and Spain, making it clear that this was in everybody's interests once Brexit had materialised.

There was a discussion on the effects of clause 24 of the EU Council negotiating guidelines which effectively granted Spain an additional veto over the application of the EU/UK future relationship agreement to Gibraltar. It was confirmed by the Commission that this does not relate to the withdrawal negotiations with the United Kingdom, but to the future relationship between the EU and the United Kingdom.

The Government has been in close contact with the United Kingdom over the publication in Westminster today of further U.K. papers about Brexit and the Great Repeal Bill.



Commenting on the meeting, the Chief Minister said: "I am delighted that top members of the EU negotiating team made the time to meet with the Deputy Chief Minister, the AG and myself. It was very good of them to see Gibraltar on the same day that they also met with Scotland and Wales. Clearly, there is one negotiation and this is led by the U.K. Government on behalf of all the countries and territories in the British family of nations. However, it has nonetheless been very useful to put to them our point of view directly so that this is understood by the top team on the EU side as well."