



PRESS RELEASE

No: 631/2018

Date: 14th October 2018

Cabinet and Opposition Briefed over the Weekend as Brexit Negotiation Intensifies Towards Conclusion

There was an extraordinary session of the Cabinet on Saturday in order to update Ministers about the continuing negotiations for Gibraltar and the United Kingdom to leave the European Union. This was followed by a briefing with Opposition Members of the Brexit Select Committee.

The Chief Minister Fabian Picardo made it clear during the last meeting of the Gibraltar Parliament that Brexit negotiations would intensify with the approach of the European Council meeting this week. There have been intensive Brexit meetings in London and in Brussels. The Chief Minister flew from London to Brussels and was joined there by Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia who flew in from New York.

Both flew back to Gibraltar on Friday evening and back again to Brussels on Sunday morning. The Attorney General Michael Llamas has been permanently based in Brussels for the last two weeks. The Financial Secretary Albert Mena is also part of the team.

The Government of Gibraltar has been, and continues to be, fully involved in the negotiations. The position as articulated for the United Kingdom remains the same for Gibraltar. No deal is better than a bad deal.

The meetings have centred on the details of a specific Protocol to the Withdrawal Agreement about Gibraltar to be entered into between the United Kingdom and the European Union. There will be similar protocols on Northern Ireland and on the UK Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus.

The definition of the term United Kingdom, under the Withdrawal Agreement, includes Gibraltar. The United Kingdom, under the 2006 Constitution, remains responsible for entering into international agreements on behalf of Gibraltar.

However, the Government has made it clear that the practical implementation of the benefits and obligations of such agreements can only rest with the Gibraltar Government.

The recourse mechanism for the UK-EU Agreement, if agreed, will be a Joint Committee at the top, with separate Specialised Committees covering areas like Gibraltar, Northern Ireland and Cyprus.



There will be a set of practical measures spelt out in separate arrangements with Spain covering tax cooperation, police and customs cooperation, the environment, citizens' rights and tobacco. These will be time limited, where necessary, to the end of the transition period which is December 2020. In keeping with the UK-EU structure, the proposed plan is for a number of Coordinating Committees to cover some of these topic areas and to report up the chain to the main UK-EU Committee.

It is important to bear in mind that the discussions on Gibraltar are part of the wider negotiations for the UK to exit the European Union and they play out against this broader background. The Government of Gibraltar, in the meantime, continues to prepare for all eventualities including the possibility of a no deal Brexit.