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Government regret Opposition's negative and destructive approach to Tax Treaty

The Government deeply regret the negative and destructive approach that the Opposition continue to adopt in relation to the Tax Treaty. This is nothing more than yet another cheap and transparent attempt to confuse and mislead public opinion.

Reacting to the most recent GSD Opposition statements on this subject, the Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP said:

“The statement from the Opposition on the Tax Treaty is unbelievable. The GSD would have Gibraltar believe that we have made concessions to Spain. We would never have done so. Indeed, what the GSD want Gibraltarians to believe is that Sir Joe Bossano, Joseph Garcia, all my other Cabinet colleagues and I have gone soft on Spain. This is utterly ridiculous. No one will ever believe that. No one will ever believe that the GSD are tougher on the Spanish issue than we are. The GSD were ready to move the artificial reef we created in British Gibraltar Territorial Waters. They did a deal to allow Spaniards to fish in BGTW whilst Gibraltarians were prevented from doing so. They agreed the Cordoba Airport Agreement that gave powers to Spanish Guardia Civil officers over Gibraltarians at the airport. Who can believe that they are better guardians of our sovereignty than we are? No one will believe them. But the GSD continue to side with Spain. Now they are even siding with Spain at the United Nations against Gibraltar on the issue of Spain's BLACK UPON WHITE recognition of the separate and distinct Gibraltarian identity under the Gibraltarian Status Act, our Parliament and our legislative capacity. This is a great achievement for Gibraltar. Sir Joe Bossano has already highlighted this at the UN Self Determination Seminar in Grenada. I have highlighted this also in New York last week at the Committee of Twenty Four. The Opposition now makes the same arguments as the Spanish Government to try to argue that the clear words on the text of the Tax Treaty do not mean what they clearly say. I never thought I would see the GSD stoop so low and side with Spain against Gibraltar on the text of a statement by a Chief Minister to the United Nations. What next?

What I will tell the GSD is that they are being short sighted in the extreme. This Tax Treaty will be good for the growth of our international business. The GSD, however, seem more concerned about attracting business from Spanish nationals and Spanish residents or Spanish companies to Gibraltar. We need to be looking beyond Spain and beyond the EU for our sources of business. That is what we are doing. Our vision extends beyond the horizon. The GSD just seem to think that the only places we can do profitable business is Spain, and to do so in a less than transparent way. That is not the future of business, it's not a route to growth and it is not a secure and sustainable way on which to lay the strongest foundations for our future. The GSD is stuck in the past and stuck in a world in which doing untransparent business in and with Spain is the be-all and end-all of their economic vision. They are worse than wrong and their outlook is dangerously short sighted for Gibraltar, Gibraltarians and Gibraltar businesses. Indeed, the GSD seems to have



failed to understand that over 90% of all our business is in respect of the UK, UK residents and UK businesses.

I very much look forward to having a debate in Parliament on the subject of the Tax Treaty.”