



PRESS RELEASE

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Chief Minister Responds to GPLM & Confirms He Backs Yes Vote in Referendum

The Chief Minister has today responded to the complaint of the Gibraltar Pro-Life Movement in respect of his comments on the referendum.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo, said: “I have said in Parliament and during the recent General Election campaign that my view is that our abortion laws should change to allow abortion in the circumstances provided for in our amendment to the Crimes Act. I will repeat that whenever I am asked, wherever I am asked and by whoever I am asked in the run up to the date of the referendum in March. I believe the issue is one of a woman’s right to choose and that abortion should be a matter addressed in our health services in a modern society. Mr Parody, Ms Morillo and other members of their team had better start getting used to it. It is my view and the view also expressed by many members of the Government that I lead. But the decision on whether or not to activate the new law is now for the people in the referendum.

“Mr Parody and Ms Morillo and other members of their team call for respect, but then fail to respect the right of elected members of the Parliament and executive position holders to express our views on this subject, even when requested to do so by an interviewer. I will certainly not accept any attempt to prevent me from expressing my views. All former Chief Ministers have expressed their views on issues which have been subject to a referendum before, from Sir Joshua in 1967 and Sir Peter in 2002, as I did in 2016 on the Brexit referendum. No one ever complained about those expressions of their opinions. That is not going to change now because Mr Parody and Ms Morillo and other members of their team don’t like my views. They had better start getting used to hearing me express my honestly held views and to watch and hear me seeking to persuade people to register to vote, to go out and vote, and to vote Yes in this referendum.

“It seems to me that, not content with supporting a position that seeks to tell women what they can and cannot do with their bodies, Mr Parody and Ms Morillo and other members of their team now want to tell me what I can and cannot say and where I can and cannot say it. They also purport to tell journalists from the national broadcaster, GBC, what they can ask and where and how they should edit and broadcast the answers they are given.

“Finally, I am grateful to Mr Parody and Ms Morillo and other members of their team for their complaint as it has allowed me once again to be clear in expressing my support as an individual and as Chief Minister for a YES vote in the coming referendum. As I told GBC, I believe that a vote for YES is a vote for the rights of women and I wholeheartedly support that position and seek that everyone should go out and vote YES for that reason.”