



PRESS RELEASE

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Meetings in Seville for the Chief Minister

This afternoon, the Chief Minister of Gibraltar, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, was in Seville for a meeting with the top regional representatives in Andalucia of the two principal Spanish trade unions, Comisiones Obreras and Union General de Trabajadores.

The meeting was further to those at No6 Convent Place earlier in the year after the Brexit referendum. Its aim was to continue the analysis of how to ensure that Brexit does not affect the livelihoods of people working in Gibraltar. In total there 12,000 such workers, 7,000 of them Spanish, who live in Spain and work in Gibraltar.

The meeting coincided with the arrival in the Campo de Gibraltar of the acting Spanish Foreign, Sr Jose Manuel Garcia Margallo, who delivered an address setting out his vision of Joint Spanish Sovereignty over Gibraltar. The Chief Minister had refused Sr Margallo's invitation to attend the lunch.

Mr Picardo said: "As usual I have found the unions very supportive of our position that seeks to guarantee the prosperity both of Gibraltar and of the Campo de Gibraltar and to put people and workers first. I have been able to share with them our commitment not to unilaterally impose any restrictions on the free movement of people or workers coming across the frontier to visit Gibraltar or to work in our economy. On a day when Sr Margallo was in the Campo for the first time since he became a Minister, in my view it was important that we should continue to do the work we have been doing so effectively. We have demonstrated to representatives of working people that there are many ways in which we are prepared to work to secure jobs and economic activity for the future by working for mutual benefit of workers and people on both sides of the frontier. We have repeatedly stated and will continue to state that, before and after Brexit, our position has been to advocate dialogue. That has worked under the Trilateral Forum which was accepted by Spain and which the United Kingdom has stated it remains firmly committed to and which Gibraltar continues to advocate. It is only through dialogue that we will be able to advance mutually beneficial progress but it has to be clear that dialogue cannot include sovereignty as an item for discussion or negotiation. It has also been important to highlight here in Seville that we will never surrender any part of our sovereignty in exchange for access to the single market, free movement or any other benefit. That should be clear beyond peradventure. If sovereignty, or any part of it, is the price of access to the single market or for free movement, then people in Spain need to be clear that it is a price we will never pay. In fact, it is important to get through to people that whoever thinks that Joint Sovereignty might somehow prosper is living in cloud cuckoo land. And Gibraltar has to continue to be entirely united on this front to ensure that Snr Margallo and



the whole of Spain get the message. I have made clear that the EU Treaties will apply to Gibraltar after Article 50 is triggered until such time as a Brexit actually occurs given that the contrary seems to have been suggested by Sr Margallo. '