



HM Government of Gibraltar

Deputy Chief Minister

PRESS RELEASE

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Referendum 50 memorial event at Casemates

Referendum 50, a memorial event to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum will take place at Casemates Square on Friday 8 September. The event will feature local talent and personalities and will aim to blend a serious political message with music and dance in order to tell the story of the referendum.

The Government will make available seating to the general public on a first come first served basis and there will be reserved seating for elderly also on a first come first served basis and an area for persons with disabilities. The Referendum took place 50 years ago, which means that those aged 21 or over who cast their vote at the time are now aged 71 or above. It would be particularly relevant that those who cast their vote on 10 September 1967 come to Casemates to enjoy the event and recall how they made history.

It was precisely the festive, family atmosphere, that was a hallmark of the weeks and days leading to 10 September, that the event at Casemates hopes to recreate. It will feature performances by Omnibus, GAMPA drumline, Chloe Martinez, Gibraltar Academy of Dance, JF Dance, Stylos Dance Studios and many others.

These thematic artistic performances will be mixed with political messages of the time including personal testimonials. There will be extracts of relevant historical material read out during the event, including an extract from the speech given in the House of Commons on 14 June 1967 by the then UK Minister for the Commonwealth Judith Hart who announced that a Referendum would take place in Gibraltar later that year.

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia, who has been leading on the commemoration of the referendum, said:

“The Government is very grateful to all those who have given of their time in order to plan and take forward Referendum 50. I particularly want to thank Christian Santos, who is responsible for



bringing all this together, and the Government team from my office, the protocol office, the media department and the Culture and Heritage Ministries.

We have wanted to involve local talent and local people and they will be at the centre of the programme for this event. It will also serve as a curtain-raiser for the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra the day after.

The Referendum was a watershed in the political and constitutional development of Gibraltar. It was held against the tensions generated by Franco's Spain against us both locally at the land frontier and internationally at the United Nations. It was the first time that the people of Gibraltar were given the choice of remaining British or passing sovereignty to Spain and 99% opted for the former option. After 10 September 1967 Gibraltar was formally British by consent.

It is also important that younger generations understand the trials and tribulations that their ancestors lived through because this kind of shared historical experience has contributed to cementing the solid sense of Gibraltarian identity that we have today."

Referendum 50 will take place at Casemates Square on Friday 8 September at 8pm and is free of charge.