



PRESS RELEASE

No: 100/2020

Date: 19th February 2020

Gibraltar House in Brussels will Play Vital Role Going Forward

The Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia has said that Gibraltarians did not want Brexit nor did we vote for it, but now we have to get on with it and secure the best possible deal going forward. These comments were made during Dr Garcia's address at a reception for contacts and guests from the Brussels community.

The reception took place at Gibraltar House in Brussels.

Dr Garcia said that the Government had no intention of closing the Gibraltar mission in Brussels following our departure from the European Union. He pointed to the Channel Islands as territories largely outside the EU that had long maintained an office there. The UK Overseas Territory of Bermuda, for example, had opened an office in Brussels only after the Brexit referendum.

He said that the work of the Brussels office would now be more challenging but also more important than ever before. There will be plenty to do and Gibraltar House will play a vital role going forward.

The Deputy Chief Minister was full of praise for the former Director of Gibraltar House Sir Graham Watson and for his successor Daniel D'Amato. He said that it had been an honour to have had Sir Graham first as our MEP and then as our representative.

Dr Garcia made the point that this was his first visit to Brussels as a third country national now that the UK and Gibraltar are third countries which are no longer part of the EU. This change had not been easy but now was the time to move past the labels of Remain and Leave in order to concentrate instead on securing the future.

Dr Garcia made the point that the movement of different categories of persons across the border with Spain was essential in order to generate even greater shared prosperity all round. There were residents, tourists and workers and all three interacted economically with each other and with the wider region.

A common travel area between Gibraltar and the European Union was a possible solution. He made the point that different micro-states inside the geographical territory of the EU had all developed bespoke border relationships with their neighbours.

"I cannot stress enough that a fluid border for residents, workers and tourists would be essential to generate even greater prosperity than we already do", he said.