

# News story: Robin Walker: 'Gibraltar has particular interests'

Minister for Exiting the European Union Robin Walker, Foreign Office Minister Sir Alan Duncan and International Trade Minister Lord Price today (1 March) hosted the second Joint Ministerial Council (Gibraltar EU Negotiations) to discuss Gibraltar's priorities as we prepare to exit the European Union.

Gibraltar is a British Overseas Territory with a population of over 32,000. In 2015/16, its GDP was forecast to be £1.77bn. Its main industries are tourism, financial services, online gaming, shipping and construction.

The discussions today centred around the opportunities and challenges in areas such as trade and market access, with ministers in agreement that we must ensure Gibraltar's interests are taken into account.

Speaking after the meeting, Minister for Exiting the European Union Robin Walker said:

We recognise that Gibraltar has particular interests, and that is why this dedicated forum is vital. It gives us the opportunity to discuss Gibraltar's priorities and ensure their interests are taken into account.

We have had a useful and informative discussion today and I will continue to engage with Gibraltar throughout the negotiations, as we forge a new relationship with the EU and look outward into the world. As the Lords' report today has recognised, the UK has a responsibility to represent Gibraltar in these negotiations and we will do so better informed as a result of this process.

Minister for Europe Sir Alan Duncan said:

UK is steadfast in our support for Gibraltar, its people and its economy. As the UK leaves the EU, we are making sure we understand the priorities of Overseas Territories, including Gibraltar, so that the new relationship with the EU works for all. The JMC, and the useful discussion today, is a key part of that dialogue.

International Trade Minister Lord Price said:

The UK is banging the drum for British businesses across a range of international markets and we are committed to taking the needs of Gibraltar and other Overseas Territories into account during this process.

That's why I was pleased to be part of today's meeting to discuss the place of Gibraltar in the global trade agenda. This forum provides a welcome opportunity to hear from Gibraltar on their priorities and ensure we're working together as we look towards our future as a global leader on free trade.

As the UK leaves the EU, the government will ensure the priorities of the Overseas Territories, including Gibraltar, and the Crown Dependencies are understood through a range of engagements. These will continue after we trigger Article 50 and begin the process of exit later this month.