



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

**AFTERNOON SESSION: 4.30 p.m. – 7.15 p.m.**

**Gibraltar, Wednesday, 4th March 2026**

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# The Gibraltar Parliament

*The Parliament met at 4.30 p.m.*

[MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Judge K Ramagge GMH *in the Chair*]

[CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENT: P A Borge McCarthy *in attendance*]

## GOVERNMENT MOTION

**Madam Speaker:** Now that we are all rested, I will invite any other hon. Member who wishes to speak to do so.

5 Yes, the Hon. Mr Feetham.

**Minister for Justice, Trade and Industry (Hon. N Feetham):** Madam Speaker, I rise to support the motion before this House asking the United Kingdom Government to enter into the UK-EU Treaty in respect of Gibraltar for and on behalf of Gibraltar. This debate is not about refighting  
10 Brexit. That chapter is written.

This debate is about what we do now, about how we secure Gibraltar's stability and prosperity in the world as it is, not as it was back then.

The decision we take today will have immediate and tangible consequences for our economy, our workforce, our businesses, our border with the European Union and our way of life. Madam  
15 Speaker, if we are honest with ourselves, not entering into this treaty will not preserve the status quo as we know it. It will fundamentally destabilise it.

That is why, Madam Speaker, I have taken the deliberate decision to script and read my address to this House today. The issues before us are too important and the stakes too high for anything  
20 less than careful and considered words. It is also one of those moments that require some straight talking.

Madam Speaker, I have devoted my professional life to helping to build our economy in the financial sectors and a significant part of my career to the advancement of knowledge and education, principally in the field of economic development. Like all my ministerial colleagues, I  
25 have tried to bring everything I have learned to the service of our people.

I am going to pause, Madam Speaker, until the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. Mr Bossino sit down. They might want to hear what I have to say next, Madam Speaker. They might  
30 want to hear what I have to say.

Equally, I have no doubt that every hon. Member in this House had the best interest of Gibraltar at heart. To vote against this motion or call for an abstention in this vote today would be a total  
35 abdication of responsibility. Having said that, Madam Speaker, the contributions from hon. Members opposite, except for the self-proclaimed heartfelt contribution of the Hon. Mr Bossino, are confusing, if not entirely contradictory.

Yesterday, during the debate, they effectively voted in support of the motion through their amendment and they signalled that they will support it again when the Hon. Chief Minister calls  
35 for a division. Yet, in all their speeches, except for the Hon. Mr Bossino, they gave us every reason why, according to them, this is a very bad treaty for Gibraltar. It beggars belief.

They support a treaty which all, except the Hon. Mr Bossino, have effectively characterised as very bad. *(Interjection)* Madam Speaker, the hon. Lady opposite, in her address, made what can only be described as a very revealing admission. I believe I heard her saying that initially she was not going to vote for this agreement and that she was, in her own words, forced to consider it and that she experienced an agonising moment.

Madam Speaker, it is evident from the speeches of the hon. Members opposite that this was likely not her own view alone, except for the Hon. Mr Bossino, *(laughter)* who had a very clear view on the issue.

So what changed, Madam Speaker? Because the treaty has not changed. The text has not changed. The negotiated outcome has not changed. Let me summarise what might have happened.

I suspect they originally drafted speeches abstaining or opposing the treaty, except for the Hon. Mr Bossino, *(laughter)* Madam Speaker, and then they were brought back into the fold by Sir Peter Caruana, whom the Chronicle on Monday described as the best deal.

What they are now really doing, except for the Hon. Mr Bossino, *(laughter)* is sitting on the fence, Madam Speaker. If the treaty delivers, they will say they supported it. If there are difficulties, they will say they opposed it. In effect, they are positioning themselves politically.

However, the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition, may want to listen carefully to the contribution of the Hon. Mr Bossino because he was not in this House for the entire speech. I appreciate he was being interviewed on GBC. I am told in significantly less conciliatory language than his parliamentary colleague, the Hon. Mr Bossino, let us be clear.

Our current economic model built on the reality of a looper Frontier will not survive a hard border. Speaking for myself, can I live without crossing the Frontier? If I must, whilst I could, if I had to, we cannot expect that younger or future generations of Gibraltarians, but our economy as it is structured today, certainly cannot.

Madam Speaker, these are the socio-economic costs and consequences of a no-treaty scenario. All treaties inherently try to address some uncertainty or challenge. This one addresses the single greatest uncertainty and challenge we have faced in a generation, not only since 2016, and one which the Hon. Chief Minister has previously described as existential for Gibraltar.

With 15,000 workers crossing daily between Gibraltar and Spain, border fluidity is not an abstract policy objective. It is the lifeblood of our economy and supports much of our tax revenues. It sustains families on both sides of the Frontier. It currently underpins the economic viability of key sectors, including gaming and financial services, that account for 50% of our economy. It also underpins investor confidence. Without the treaty, the EU's entry-exit system will apply in full at our large border, including biometric capture, such as facial scans and fingerprints, for non-EU nationals. The treaty avoids this for Gibraltar residents. The alternative would be a very serious disruption to daily life and our economy.

Madam Speaker, fluidity matters because the economy matters. Our tax revenues matter. Our economic stability matters. Our ability to fund our public sector, education, public pensions and our health services matter. For a country of our size, that is not theoretical. It is a live issue, even an existential issue. The stakes are huge.

Speaking to my ministerial responsibilities, Madam Speaker, the gaming industry and the financial services sector have affirmed their support for a negotiated outcome after a decade of uncertainty. The gaming sector stands to be one of the principal beneficiaries of the treaty. The sector is a cornerstone of our modern economy, employs approximately 3,400 people, two-thirds of whom are cross-border workers.

The importance of fluid movement cannot be overstated. Senior executives in the sector also live in Gibraltar. They invest here. They make strategic and operational decisions here. The treaty does not restore the right to provide gambling services directly to the EU, but fluidity of the border was essential to the operational needs of gaming companies in Gibraltar. Crucially, the position of VAT for gambling support services remains intact, a key red line in the treaty negotiations.

At a time when the industry is confronted when the UK gambling tax increases, the treaty mitigates what would otherwise have been an even bigger shock of a hard border. Whilst the sector may have to operate with a lower profit margin, at least with mobility certainty and a modernised Gambling Act, Gibraltar remains firmly positioned as a Tier 1 jurisdiction.

Madam Speaker, this treaty must be viewed as part of our wider programme of economic development. The recent United Kingdom's announcement on increases of betting duty reminded us that we cannot rely on any single trading partner, even if that is the UK. Madam Speaker, to be frank, we also do not know what other challenges could emerge in that trading relationship with the UK. This treaty, therefore, provides a parallel framework with the European Union to help us diversify our economy, open new markets and create new opportunities.

I will say more about economic opportunities when I present two Bills to this House shortly. I think the Hon. Mr Bossino, during his heartfelt address, Madam Speaker, was lamenting that we may have to reinvent ourselves if things do not work out with the treaty, even though I accept that he is the most enthusiastic supporter of the treaty on the opposite side of the House today. Well, Madam Speaker, we always have, indeed we have had to, over the last ten years in particular.

Before entering public life, much of my professional work following the Brexit referendum was shaped by its consequences. Within days of that referendum, Madam Speaker, I prepared a roadmap for the financial services and insurance sector, much of which depended on European Union passporting rights. Brexit created profound uncertainty for these businesses and I worked closely with industry to safeguard stability and continuity.

What that period demonstrated was this. Gibraltar did not freeze. We adapted. We found solutions. We continued to grow our business and indeed our revenues. This treaty is a continuation of the same spirit, pragmatic, forward-looking and rooted in cooperation.

Madam Speaker, I intend to work very closely with my colleague, the Minister for Business, and we will show what we are capable of doing precisely because we both have a professional track record. With regards to my taxation Ministry, Madam Speaker, whilst a transaction tax will not fall within the purview of the Income Tax Office, which I am ministerially responsible for, Gibraltar will continue implementing recognised principles of good governance in taxation that includes adherence to global standards on tax transparency, exchange of information and fair tax competition.

As of today, Madam Speaker, I am pleased to report to this House that we have surpassed last year's record corporate tax receipts with over £245 million already collected and one more month still to go until the end of the financial year. Madam Speaker, that is almost a quarter of a billion pounds in corporate tax receipts alone and we may well have reached that number by the end of the month. Madam Speaker, let me repeat that again. Almost a quarter of a billion pounds.

This success, Madam Speaker, is built, among other things, on the premise of an open Frontier. Madam Speaker, let me repeat those words again. On the premise of an open Frontier.

I challenge anyone to point to another country that has delivered tax revenue results of this scale in such a short time and without business disruption. It is not a coincidence and Hansard will attest to that fact. Instead, it reflects what can be achieved through strategic planning and responsible fiscal management, one which I have referred to from the outset, in and outside this House, as our National Tax Strategy.

Madam Speaker, I had a real sense of *déjà vu* while hearing the speeches of the hon. Members opposite. When I brought the National Tax Strategy to this House, the hon. Members criticised it. Here, including the Hon. Mr Bossino.

However, sat on the fence. They offered no clear alternative, no plan, no vision for Gibraltar. Just like them, today, as a collective, they present no coherent vision in relation to the Treaty.

However, they come here today saying they should have negotiated the Treaty with us. Madam Speaker, in politics there is always a choice. Hesitation or delivery. We choose delivery.

Well, here are the tax results for all to judge. It is a remarkable achievement and even more significant when one recalls that last year's record of £212 million was itself a 37% increase on the previous year, which I described in this House through the budget, as truly exceptional.

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The increase in these extraordinary tax revenues we have once again worked so hard to secure, Madam Speaker, are not attributable to gaming companies. Hugely important as their contribution continues to be. Nor, indeed, are they the result of any exceptional payment by any single taxpayer?

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We have already begun implementing the next phase of our tax strategy. As I said, we would at the last budget. How we manage our tax strategy going forward with the Treaty is equally as important.

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In the most recent tax payments we have seen a decline from the gaming sector, as companies anticipate reduced profits resulting from the United Kingdom's increase in gaming tax on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. This development was inevitable and, as I have explained throughout, we expect a significant impact by the end of this calendar year when I present the new Gambling Bill to this House, I will elaborate further. Madam Speaker, why do I say this?

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Corporate tax revenues are the lifeline of our economy. They fund our public sector, our schools, our scholarships, our pensions, our health service. This is critical to maintaining both economic and social stability.

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Our economic model depends on stability, certainty and investor confidence. This is why this Treaty is important. Had we not acted to protect Gibraltar's public finances as and when we did, there would have been at least £150 million less in the coffers, to use the favourite term of the hon. Members opposite, Madam Speaker, over the last 15 months.

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Indeed, the shortfall would have been even greater when measured against prior year receipts, given the clear path of downward trend in corporate tax revenues that we were witnessing at the time, as I have previously highlighted in this House. The easiest political course would have been to do nothing and hope for the best. However, we could not, just as we cannot do so now.

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We must act and we must support this Treaty. As a Government, Madam Speaker, we have a fundamental obligation to protect our people and our community. We carry the responsibility to build a better society and to improve the standard of living for all.

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This Treaty is precisely about protecting jobs, protecting tax revenue and protecting opportunity. However, democracy is a two-way social contract. It is not only what the Government provides or can offer the citizen, but also a commitment on the part of all citizens to support and sustain the society from which we all benefit.

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It should already be evident, Madam Speaker, that what any Government can provide is not a bottomless pit or our tax revenues, even extraordinary results of the last two years, are not limitless, a message I repeat at every opportunity. However, there is, Madam Speaker, respectfully, a fundamental difference between the approach of hon. Members opposite and that of Members on this side of the House. They say they cannot commit to any expenditure until they know precisely what is in the coffers.

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We say we will work tirelessly to ensure that the coffers are replenished and we have. If we were to adopt their approach, Madam Speaker, nothing would ever be done, including this Treaty. Madam Speaker, back to the application of the Treaty, none of this works without operational capability and readiness.

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The Royal Gibraltar Police has been closely engaged in Treaty preparations. Supporting this Treaty, of course, will mean supporting the resources necessary to implement it effectively. Finally, Madam Speaker, there are members of our community who worry that the Treaty dilutes sovereignty. The Chief Minister and the Father of the House have been absolutely clear that nothing in this Treaty alters sovereignty. This is supported by legal opinions from eminent lawyers. Nothing changes our constitutional status. Nothing diminishes our British identity. We remain British. We remain self-governing. We remain secure in our constitutional arrangements.

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What this Treaty does is provide a structured and legal framework to manage the practical consequences of Brexit. Doing anything other than supporting this motion invites disruption. It

190 invites a hard border and the worst consequences of a Brexit we did not ask for nor did we support. It introduces uncertainty at our border at a time when global conditions are already fragile. Supporting this motion provides border fluidity, legal certainty, investor confidence.

This Treaty is not a panacea. Its success will depend not on signature but on the practical implementation in practise. Whilst every Treaty is intended to be durable, history reminds us that  
195 no such guarantee can ever be given.

That, however, is not a reason to refuse to enter into this Treaty. On the contrary, it is a reason to proceed. We must do so and at the same time continue over time to restructure and strengthen parts of our economy so that we are prepared for all future eventualities.

Gibraltar has always been stronger when it has combined pragmatism with intelligence and principle. This is one of those defining moments. Let us be honest with ourselves. Securing a better  
200 Treaty would simply not have been possible. This is the best deal. As a young boy with an interest in local politics, I recall the then Chief Minister and the founding father of this community, Sir Joshua Hassan, saying, politics is the art of the possible.

Former Chief Minister Sir Peter Caruana himself has repeatedly said that we must consider  
205 prize over price. Madam Speaker, time will be the ultimate judge of the decision we take today. Perhaps many members may no longer sit in this House when that judgement is made.

However, I hope that history will record that in this defining moment, we chose the course that best safeguarded the continued prosperity of this community at this point in time. Madam  
210 Speaker, party politics in Gibraltar tends to be tribal. However, the Treaty before us is far too important for that.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I first met the Hon. Fabian Picardo many years ago when he was a  
215 young man with a passion for public life. Even then, I sensed he would be a consequential figure. Today, through this Treaty motion and the leadership he has shown in bringing it to this House, he has cemented his place as one of the most consequential Chief Ministers in the history of Gibraltar.

For that, he deserves to be thanked by everyone. I include myself, Madam Speaker, when I say that sometimes we do not say thank you enough. There are those who on party political lines and on the opposite side of the House, Madam Speaker, will want to bid farewell to the Chief Minister.

220 However, we, on this side of the House, we say your work must continue, Chief Minister. Madam Speaker, I support the motion and commend it to this House. (*Banging on desks*)

**Madam Speaker:** Anybody else? Any other hon. Member wishes to speak? The Hon. Mr Santos.

**Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture and Tourism (Hon. C P Santos):** Madam Speaker,  
225 before I go any further, I am going to pick up from where my hon. Colleague has left off. I wish to place on record my sincere thanks to the Chief Minister, the Deputy Chief Minister, the Attorney General and all their staff for the extraordinary work undertaken over these past years in negotiating the agreement in respect of Gibraltar between the United Kingdom and the European Union. They have worked tirelessly as one team alongside His Majesty's Government of the United  
230 Kingdom to secure the best possible outcome for our people in circumstances not of our choosing.

As has already been said in this House, this agreement may not be perfect, but it is not the situation we would ever have designed for ourselves. We did not choose the path that led us here. We were required to negotiate, and negotiate they have, with resolve, with discipline and with an unshakeable commitment to ensuring that Gibraltar's sovereignty was never in question and  
235 never open for discussion.

They have negotiated a treaty that protects our sovereignty and where no red lines have been crossed. Madam Speaker, I cannot speak on this motion without reflecting on the deep personal dimension that underpins it. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2016, when the result of the referendum to leave the European Union became clear, a cloud of uncertainty descended upon Gibraltar. I remember  
240 that morning vividly. Like so many others, I did not know what awaited us. For many, like me, with partners from the other side of the border, it brought up many questions and worries due to the

uncertainty. I was not worried about the future of the relationship. I was worried about what political decisions might mean for our future together. Would there be restrictions? Would the border harden? Would families once again be separated, as my mother's generation experienced during the years of the closed Frontier? Those stories of isolation, of scarcity, of divided families are not distant history for us. They are living memories passed down at kitchen tables. I genuinely feared that my own family might face uncertainty, bureaucracy or even separation. We are now in a position that makes those thoughts seem banal or irrelevant.

However, ten years ago, the result of the referendum brought fear of the unknown to many. We are now talking about the finer detail. However, ten years ago, we were scared about being locked in or about having our economy strangled.

We need to think back to where we started to really acknowledge where we have got to. Madam Speaker, my principal governmental interest in this agreement is tourism. Millions of visitors choose to come to the Rock each year. They come for our history, our unique blend of cultures, our British identity under the Mediterranean sun and the warmth of our people. Tourism sustains thousands of livelihoods, from hoteliers and restaurateurs to taxi drivers, tour operators, retail staff and the many workers who support the hospitality sector. Throughout these negotiations, my overriding concern was simple. How would this agreement affect demand? I can work with my team on branding, slogans, campaigns and promotions. I can ensure we have a quality product to offer. However, no marketing strategy can compensate for uncertainty, instability or barriers to entry. What we needed was assurance that this agreement would not dampen demand. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to say that demand will not be dampened. It will be strengthened. The agreement provides security and stability. Gibraltar remains British, proudly and unequivocally so.

That remains a powerful selling point, particularly for our main feeder market, the United Kingdom. Now, a Gibraltar more easily accessible to the rest of Europe. At the same time, the arrangements set out in the treaty create practical mechanisms that make Gibraltar more accessible, not less.

In respect of aviation, the agreement enables flights between Gibraltar and the European Union. This is transformative. It opens opportunities for routes beyond our traditional connections and allows us to market Gibraltar more confidently in European cities. Direct connectivity encourages short breaks, business travel, conference tourism and niche cultural events. It reduces friction for visitors and increases our competitiveness in a crowded tourism market. In short, it gives us tools for growth that were previously unavailable.

Gibraltar can become a hub for many airlines within this area. Madam Speaker, Gibraltar's position and our reputation as a safe, secure and efficient port of call is also preserved. The only change for cruise ships is that vessels now visiting Gibraltar will need to arrive from an EU port or a UK port. That is, their previous stop will have been in the EU or UK. Looking at the data of the past four years, this only affects an average of 10% of calls. This is a change in itineraries only.

Cruise companies have been briefed on this and are already amending their itineraries where necessary and planning new ones which will of course still include Gibraltar. Gibraltar maintains its appeal and the world's cruise operators value certainty above almost anything else. Their passengers will continue to disembark smoothly, enjoy their day on shore and return to their ship without complication or hindrance.

In this respect, the treaty arrangements provide clarity and reassurance. News of this treaty has been very positively received by the industry. The agreement enhances the overall attractiveness of Gibraltar as part of a broader regional itinerary.

Cruise passengers do not experience destinations in isolation. They value connectivity, ease of movement and regional harmony. Crew changes are also secure with a bespoke arrangement for Gibraltar which has already been explained by our Chief Minister.

A stable, cooperative relationship across our Frontier reassures the industry that Gibraltar remains a dependable and desirable Mediterranean stop. The fluidity that will come from having no physical border is one of the most beneficial areas in attracting more independent travellers.

295 A significant proportion of our visitors arrive as day-trippers, by coach, by car and on foot from across the border.

A freer, more fluid Frontier benefits our restaurants, our shops, our attractions and our taxis. It supports the vibrancy of Main Street, its arteries and other retail and leisure areas. It sustains small family businesses that rely on that daily flow.

300 Flow at our Frontier is not only about visitors. It is also about Frontier workers, many of whom are employed in hospitality, catering, maintenance and transport. The agreement provides them with certainty and fair treatment.

305 A reliable workforce is essential. It is essential to delivering a high-quality tourism product. Stability at the border translates into stability in service delivery, which in turn strengthens our reputation as a destination of excellence. This agreement removes any question mark over Gibraltar. It replaces fear with structure and uncertainty for stability and security.

Madam Speaker, change is inevitable. We find ourselves navigating a new reality. However, Gibraltar has never been defined by the circumstances imposed upon it. We are defined by how we respond. We are resilient, we are adaptable, and the Gibraltarian spirit has endured sieges, closures and political storms.

310 This treaty will bring changes to our economy and lifestyle. Changes that we predict will be for the better, strengthened by unity and by pragmatic decision-making. From the perspective of tourism, the agreement provides what our industry needs most. Certainty, connectivity and confidence. It safeguards our cruise business.

It enhances opportunities at our airport. It supports Frontier fluidity. It protects our workforce.

315 It reinforces Gibraltar's reputation as a safe, stable and welcoming destination. I am truly proud to stand on the right side of history, to be a part of this historic moment. Proud to lend my voice to a treaty that will ensure Gibraltar's British identity while securing a safe and stable future for generations to come.

320 I take comfort in knowing that my words of support will be recorded in Hansard reflecting a clear commitment to the long-term interests of our community. In years to come, when these debates are revisited and our contributions are read back, I have no doubt that I will look back with conviction and pride because we will make sure these arrangements work for Gibraltar because Gibraltarians will always make things work because that is how Gibraltar has always survived. For all these reasons, governmental and personal, I support this motion wholeheartedly

325 for the benefit of Gibraltar and its people.

Thank you Madam Speaker. *(Banging on desks)*

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, the Hon. Ms Orfila...

330 **Minister for Housing and the University of Gibraltar (Hon. P A Orfila):** Madam Speaker, I have never used the lectern, so it is a first. I am also very happy to see that the hon. Gentleman, Mr Bossino, is almost sitting with us now *(Laughter)* and I welcome him with open arms, despite our differences.

335 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Point of order! Point of order! *(Laughter)*

**Hon. P A Orfila:** He knows, he is wrong.

340 Madam Speaker, the treaty impact on the University of Gibraltar is extremely positive. We shall have Schengen Residency Advantage, Advanced Student Residency Permit and Operational Impact. It will remove administrative friction.

We shall be able to market an educational model unavailable elsewhere. We can make a UK accredited degree available and delivered in a Mediterranean climate, with frictionless mobility across the EEA. For third country nationals, the University of Gibraltar becomes more attractive than mainland UK institutions, which remain decoupled from the Schengen zone.

345 It will also promote a seamless fieldwork placement, efficiency for internship and exchanges  
will not be an administrative burden any longer. It will extend our application windows, meaning  
that we shall be able to accept students later in the recruitment cycle, unlike today, where we  
lose students and applicants because of this.

It also means that by reducing the eight-week visa wait and transit visa hurdles, our university  
350 will be able to increase the offer to enrol, so we shall be able to do away with the visa bottleneck.  
Also, research will now be able to attract students into the European research grid. This is  
excellent for the University of Gibraltar.

The bottom line, Madam Speaker, the 2026 treaty has potential to transform the University of  
Gibraltar from a territorial niche into a strategic bridge. This investment is measured not only in  
355 direct tuition fees, but in the university's ability to compete globally for the first time. All in all,  
this treaty is a direct strike for the growth and recognition of our university, and therefore we  
must welcome it.

Madam Speaker, with regards to housing, I will address how the implications of the UK-EU  
treaty agreement will affect Gibraltar Government housing and the people who rely upon it.  
360 Following the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union, Gibraltar has been faced  
with a moment of historic uncertainty. As a British Overseas Territory sharing land border with  
Spain, our economy, workforce and community life, as uniquely interconnected with surrounding  
regions, must/can be affected.

The proposed UK-EU treaty concerning Gibraltar negotiated between the Government of the  
365 United Kingdom and the European Union seeks to establish a stable framework for mobility, trade  
and cooperation. Madam Speaker, housing policy does not exist in isolation. It is shaped by the  
economic confidence, labour mobility, land availability and demographic trends. Any treaty that  
alters border fluidity, employment patterns or investment confidence will inevitably have  
consequences for demand on Gibraltar Government housing.

370 The treaty will help sustain our labour market. Thousands of cross-border workers contribute  
daily to Gibraltar's economy. Stability in this area protects jobs, strengthens public revenue and  
enables continued investment in public housing projects. Without such stability, economic  
contraction would limit our Government's capacity to fund new housing developments or  
maintain existing estates. Madam Speaker, this Government has already started work to  
375 implement measures in order to safeguard Gibraltar Government housing stock.

The treaty between the UK and the EU regarding Gibraltar safeguards Gibraltar Government  
housing primarily by allowing the Gibraltar Government to implement stricter residency criteria  
and ensuring that public housing remains available for long-term residents and registered  
Gibraltarians. Madam Speaker, the treaty represents both opportunity and responsibility.  
380 Through forward planning, stricter residency requirements, tighter allocation rules and firm  
enforcement, this Government has acted to protect Gibraltar Government housing stock.

We have ensured that our limited housing resources remain safeguarded for the Gibraltarians  
and long-term residents today and for future generations. Madam Speaker, Gibraltar's resilience  
lies not only in diplomacy abroad but in protecting our homeland. This treaty, supported by  
385 prudent domestic policy, shall secure both our economic future and our public housing.

Let me say one thing, Madam Speaker. The most important thing for me is the identity of the  
Gibraltarian. They are the ones that I stand here to defend at all costs. Our homeland and our  
houses belong to us, to the Gibraltarians, and to no one else. Getting into the waiting list will not  
be an easy task anymore for anybody. We need to make sure that what is ours, Madam Speaker,  
390 remains ours.

I am privileged to belong to a group of GSLP politicians who come from all walks of life and all  
ages. Some of us lived through the closed Frontier era. However, if there is one person who has  
remained unwavering in Gibraltar's defence since time immemorial, it is Sir Joe Bossano and if he  
is behind this treaty then, Madam Speaker, so am I because when it comes to fighting the enemy  
and protecting our homelands and honour, nobody, Madam Speaker, nobody has ever done it  
395 better than Sir Joe.

As for the CM and the DCM, what can I say? They gave up their lives as they knew it and threw themselves into ensuring that this treaty would be the best they could bring back for all of us, for each and every single Gibraltarian, those on the other side and those on this side, and the public at large, every single Gibraltarian. They threw themselves into trying to bring back what was most safe, what was beneficial to all of us. They have worked relentlessly around the clock, and I can vouch for that, even to the detriment of their own family life.

This is the sacrifice they made to bring back to all of us a treaty that would be safe, secure and beneficial for all Gibraltarians. I would like to thank them publicly for all the sacrifices they made and for all the hard work that they put in, both day and night. They, Madam Speaker, have given it their all.

I have every faith that this treaty will be beneficial for the progress and for the future of Gibraltar, and I therefore wholeheartedly support this motion. Thank you. (*Banging on desks*)

**Madam Speaker:** The Hon. Mr Bruzon...

**Minister for Industrial Relations, Civil Contingencies and Sport (Hon. L M Bruzon):** Madam Speaker, as I rise from a contribution on the motion, I would like to begin by thanking the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney General and the rest of the team for the hard work, dedication and sacrifice over the past five years. Indeed, Madam Speaker, during a recent contribution to this House, I stated that today I should think I have been humbled by the trust placed upon me by my community, alongside political giants like Sir Joe Bossano, Dr Joseph Garcia and Fabian Picardo, leaders who have been instrumental in defending Gibraltar and shaping the way of life we all cherish. It is evident, Madam Speaker, that today they still defend Gibraltar and the way of life we all cherish.

Madam Speaker, no one is suggesting that the treaty is perfect, but we do know that we are not the only ones looking to secure our future. Indeed, the European Union Council gave a negotiating mandate in 2014 through which Andorra, San Marino and Monaco began negotiating an agreement with the EU aimed at deepening the integration and access to the EU. Negotiations with Andorra and San Marino concluded in December 2023.

Yet, 12 years later since they started, it has still not been ratified. Negotiations with Monaco co-faulted and were suspended in September 2023.

Nine years of negotiations with Monaco, Madam Speaker, and nothing to show for it.

Twelve years of negotiations with Andorra and San Marino, and for now, nothing to show for it.

Madam Speaker, there are some who claim that they could have negotiated our treaty better and quicker than our own negotiating team. This is hard to believe. No wonder that the Father of the House said last week and repeated today that no one can ever negotiate for Gibraltar better than we can.

Madam Speaker, I was interviewed last year on GBC and asked about the impact of a non-negotiated outcome on local sports. At the time, I highlighted the situation where hundreds of locals travel to Spain every week to participate in training, competitions and leisure activities.

Football is one such sport where hundreds of local youth train and compete every week across the border, with potential impacts for them and their families, mostly parents, if their EES were introduced and they were restricted to 90 days out of every 180. This would impact training, future development of our athletes and other areas such as the wider family units.

Another example, Madam Speaker, is paddle, where again hundreds of local players travel across the border every week to play.

The removal of physical barriers to the circulations of persons between Gibraltar and the Schengen area transforms our practical reality. With streamlined border arrangements and fluid movement, our athletes, teams and supporters can travel for competitions, training and international fixtures without restrictions. Likewise, visiting teams will find access simpler and more predictable.

450 This strengthens Gibraltar's ability to host sporting events and build partnerships across Europe while strengthening youth development.

Madam Speaker, in the field of industrial relations, the treaty's provisions on Frontier workers and social security coordination provide certainty and legal clarity. Thousands of workers who cross daily between Gibraltar and the Campo de Gibraltar will benefit from protected rights and defined frameworks. For employers and trade unions alike, this reduces uncertainty and supports workforce stability. Needless to say, the treaty provides security and stability to Gibraltarians and all Gibraltar residents as well.

In relation to civil contingencies, Madam Speaker, the treaty establishes structured cooperation, industrial dialogue and mechanisms for information sharing. In a small and densely interconnected region, that cooperation is not theoretical. It is essential to resilience.

460 Finally, Madam Speaker, the five-service enhanced cross-border cooperation strengthens security, collaboration and improves preparedness. In major incidents, communication and mutual cooperation saves lives.

Madam Speaker, this treaty provides certainty, stability and structured cooperation, strengthening Gibraltar's resilience, protecting workers and expanding opportunities across sectors of our community.

Madam Speaker, my parents were born during the evacuation and I was born and grew up during the closed Frontier years. Madam Speaker, I want better for my and everyone else's children. The ramifications of a non-negotiated outcome do not bear thinking about. It is for all these reasons, Madam Speaker, that I support the motion at the minute. (*Banging on desks*)

470

**Madam Speaker:** If no other hon. Member wishes to speak? No? In that case, I call upon the mover of the original motion, now as amended, to reply.

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**Standing Order 7(1) suspended to proceed with laying of documents**

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Madam Speaker, thank you very much. Perhaps before I reply, I could suspend standing orders and lay something on the table.

480 **Clerk:** Suspension of standing orders, the Hon. Chief Minister.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Madam Speaker, I beg to move under Standing Order 7(3) to suspend Standing Order 7(1) in order to proceed with the laying of documents on the table.

485 **Madam Speaker:** Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye.) Those against? Carried.

**PAPERS TO BE LAID**

490 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Madam Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the Table:

1. The Legal Opinion from Sir Peter Caruana KCMG, KC, on the Treaty between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union in respect of Gibraltar;
2. The Legal Opinion from Jamie Trinidad KC, on the Treaty between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union in respect of Gibraltar; and finally

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500 3. The Legal Opinion from Lord Pannick, on the Treaty between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union in respect of Gibraltar.

**Madam Speaker:** Ordered to lie.

### GOVERNMENT MOTION

505

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Madam Speaker, the House now has, before it, the full text of the legal opinions that I referred to during the course of my opening. It is important that those opinions be public and that they be before the whole Parliament.

510 This has not been an easy motion to address. We are dealing with a document that is 1,018 pages. The legal practitioners amongst us might be tempted to make an address, taking all Members and those listening through the document, as if it were a contractual document, which in state terms it is, and address you as if you were in your different guise before being here, Madam Speaker, and seek to persuade that the contract should be enforced.

515 I have wanted to resist doing that because although this agreement, as the European Union calls it, this treaty, as we call it, is going to create binding international legal relations, it is what it is going to do, what it is going to mean and the effect that it is going to have that is what is important for this Parliament to consider.

520 I was very grateful to the Hon. Mr Bossino when earlier today he reflected something that I said during the course of the debate, but also before, in my statement and in my previous statements in relation to this matter, in this place and outside of this place, and that is to say that we look at the economic effect of this agreement. We look at the detail of what it does and in doing so, with all of the importance that that has, we must never forget the human impact of this story. The human effect of what this agreement will deliver and the human effect of what not doing this agreement will deliver and the Hon. Mr Bruzon has rounded up contributions in respect of this debate with that point, what we want for our children.

525 Thinking about what we want for our children, Madam Speaker, reminds me of the things that I have experienced as a child, the things that Mr Bruzon has referred to, other people have said that they refer to. The Hon. Miss Ladislaus talked about being born in 1987 and the world that she lived through. Perhaps because she was born in 1987 Madam Speaker, the filter through which Miss Ladislaus looks at things is slightly different and no doubt it is, we are all no more and no less than the product of our experience, what we have read, what we have felt, what we have lived.

530 Madam Speaker, I remember being at home with my grandmother, by then an old Spanish Republican who had come to Gibraltar, watching a man called Tejero shoot shots into the ceiling of the Parliament of our neighbouring state with all that that could imply in 1982 when the Frontier was about to open but did not open because of, at least no full opening, because of the Falklands dispute. I remember her not being able to reach Algeciras in time to see her brother die because like John Cortes told us, Algeciras which is a few kilometres away by road required two crossings of the Straits of Gibraltar and you simply could not get there in time when their relative was dying.

540 The politics of Europe and of the United Kingdom and of Boris Johnson and of Nigel Farage and of Michael Gove and of David Cameron has put us in a position where the situation that we are facing is that that Frontier, though not closed, could become so hard that it might be very difficult to get to Algeciras again in the future to see a dying relative. That is before we start to think about the economics of this.

545 As the Hon. Minister Arias Vazquez said, when the Hon. Miss Sanchez complains about somebody having cancelled or missed appointment from the care that we give, that we give so much more of than they used to give, we understand that is an important issue to follow up. Imagine if those carers, 99% of whom cross that Frontier every morning, could not make it on time

550 or did not know whether they were going to make it on time. That is what we are talking about here.

555 Apart from the economics and apart from all of the issues about who is going to be where, the particulars of which I will descend to in a moment, because by raising these more human issues and saying that hopefully with this agreement and this treaty we have resolved them, I am not for one moment ignoring that in order to do so, we set ourselves the hurdle of having to be able to resolve the issue of where people sat, where they were, what they carried with them when they were there, what they did and what they pretended to be able to do. It is only because we have resolved them that we can resolve the human issues that arise.

560 Dealing with my response this afternoon, Madam Speaker, I am going to find myself in a very difficult position, because hon. Members opposite have very often in debate become predictable, but they have behaved a little unpredictably today. I am going to spend a lot of my time this afternoon saying, I agree with Mr. Bossano and Mr. Bossino, and I disagree with the Hon. Mr. Azopardi. That is difficult, Madam Speaker, because the Hon. Mr. Bossano and the Hon. Mr. Bossino are in a different Party, and at the moment Mr. Azopardi is the same party as Mr. Bossino, although that was not ever thus, and given that the Hon. Mr. Azopardi treated us to three  
565 dissertations during the course of his address, the historic dissertation, which was the lengthiest, the sovereignty dissertation, and then the dissertation in relation to the application of both those to this motion, I am going to have to address some historic issues too, because in the context of analysing what it is that we have before us today, we do have to analyse, as they have done and as Members on this side have done, where this all comes from. What are the hurdles in the course  
570 that we have had to avoid? Where are the pitfalls that we have had to avoid? Who put them there and when?

One of them, the big pitfall to avoid, is the 1984 pitfall, the Brussels pitfall, the bilateral pitfall. Below that pit is the Strasbourg pit and the Lisbon pit, all of which go back to the 1967 resolutions of the United Nations and all of that underground maze that we need to avoid.

575 However, just above the surface is also the trilateral and from the trilateral Córdoba and the positions that people took in relation to Córdoba and the positions that people are taking in relation to this. So, in doing that, Madam Speaker, I think it is important that I start in the present, that I deal with the past and then I return to where we need to be.

580 These, Madam Speaker, are the plans of Gibraltar Airport. I have shared them with the Leader of the Opposition and I have shared them on the basis that they are not going to be published. So I am not going to publish them today, but I am going to refer to them. I am going to refer to how they refer to the clauses that hon. Members have seen, which we took them through in the briefing that we gave the Hon. Mr Azopardi, Mr Bossino and Mr Clinton and which we showed them the effect of in these plans. Now, a decision has not been made on whether these plans will  
585 be published. The Government's view is that they should be published. However, the Government's view has to be informed by advice on whether or not one publishes plans of secure areas.

590 This is an airport governed by the regulations of the Department for Transport in the United Kingdom and the CAA in Gibraltar, etc. we need to be understanding of what can and cannot be published. However, the Government's view is they should be published.

595 Why is the Government's view that they should be published? Madam Speaker because the Government believes that if we publish these plans, which the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has and has seen, then the public would see that the Leader of the Opposition is wrong, although I do not say he is intentionally wrong, he is wrong in the analysis that he has done of where Spanish police officers will be. Now, he very kindly gave way during the course of his contribution and enabled me to say that actually I thought that he had not understood or did not recall what we had explained to him because as people will see from the plan, which I wish I could publish, the Spanish police officers that he was referring to are inside the thing called the Equidistant Facility, the Joint Facility, the Second Line Check Facility or the Schengen Shack, whatever one might want  
600 to call it, on the north-eastern side, where the checks are done on arrival to Gibraltar. For all of

the reasons I have explained since December 2020, when we explained the New Year's Eve Framework, when this was agreed, and which the Hon. the Father of the House, Sir Joe Bossano, explained even more clearly in only the way that he can this morning, that does not cause us a problem, neither do we believe that we have for one moment transgressed or neared  
605 transgression of our Red Line. It is that simple and on the north-western corner of the airport, where there are not just passport matters dealt with, but also customs matters dealt with, we are very clear that all of those things are happening, where they involve Gibraltar authorities, south of the line where the Frontier is, north of the line where the Frontier is for Spanish customs, and in the context of things that happen south of the line, and involve Spanish passport checks, in the  
610 equidistant facility, that is to say, where our own Police and Customs and BCA have equidistant access, and that therefore, all of the criteria that the Cabinet insisted we should meet, that we shared with the public, and we told the public we would stick to, has been stuck to.

I would not fancy coming here, Madam Speaker, if we had not stuck to those. Indeed, I have been very honest and very clear with the public. I said, even before the General Election, this will  
615 go, not to a referendum, and I thank the Hon. Mr Bossino for accepting that that has been our consistent position, not to a referendum, I think Miss Ladislaus has said it, but to a motion of the Parliament. However, I will not take it to a motion of the Parliament, if it does not pass the Cabinet.

What does that mean? It is very clear. If it did not pass Joe Bossano, Nigel Feetham, all of the rest of us, and Joseph Garcia, and Fabian Picardo, and Pat Orfila, and Christian Santos, and Gemma  
620 Arias Vazquez, and John Cortes, and Leslie Bruzon, it would not have come here. I would not have come here to persuade them to support me to achieve this without my Cabinet colleagues. Madam Speaker, it is not a particular political secret that the flock of hawks is on this side, not on that side. I mean, running a Cabinet of the GSLP is a bit like falconry. You have got to get them to come back to their glove. I mean, given what we have seen today, running a shadow Cabinet of  
625 the GSD requires two gloves, because people seem to be attracted to different types of bait on the other side.

On our side, there is only hawks, Madam Speaker. The hawks have approved this, because this does not cross red lines. This does not put boots on the ground. It definitely puts boots in the Joint Facility. Definitely but boots of both nationalities, the Spanish and British variety. That is what I  
630 told Gibraltar in December 2020. The boots will be there, but in the Joint Facility, not outside. That is what Dominic Raab signed up to. That is what the Conservative Party signed up to in the United Kingdom. That is what Liz Truss approved as Foreign Secretary with a design that was not a million miles from this. Actually, it was not as good as this at the time but, Madam Speaker, I hope, because in the end, if I default into pugilistic mode, it is only because hon. Members opposite have  
635 set my default mechanism to that. I am quite a conciliatory bloke. Anybody who knows me knows I am quite a people pleaser. I would like to help people along, but they default me to pugilist, Madam Speaker. The Hon. Sir Peter Caruana, who I hope is watching, brought me up on fighting. One could not come to this place before and have anything but an argument even over the time that we might have tea, or whether we might have tea, Madam Speaker. So if I default to pugilist,  
640 I ask them to forgive me, because it is not my intention to be pugilistic in this debate.

It is my intention in responding to the points that hon. Members have made and the Hon. Mr Azopardi defaulted to aggression when he was making the points when he was making the points that we had transgressed red lines, that we permitted boots on the ground, *et cetera*. I mean, look, in the history lesson, he defaulted to monotone, but on this bit, he defaulted to pugilism,  
645 and not trying to respond with pugilism. I am trying actually to do the opposite.

I am trying to give them the comfort that they can vote yes to this motion, knowing, as we know, that there are no boots on the ground, that the boots are all inside the joint facility because if we believed that there were boots outside of the joint facility, then we would vote no to our own motion. It is very clear. It is very clear, Madam Speaker. In uniform, inside the joint facility. Is  
650 there presence outside of the joint facility? Yes, there is presence outside of the joint facility. Not in uniform. I do not know whether the hon. Members get the idea that they have guns. Right? Is there presence today in Gibraltar of Spanish officials and Spanish police officers? Yes, there is,

655 Madam Speaker. Unregulated. I have had brought to my attention a number of surveillance operations by Spanish police in Gibraltar without the consent of the Royal Gibraltar Police. I have had brought to my attention operations of Spanish police within metres of the residence of a Chief Minister, not me. What does this do? This regulates what they are already doing. It means that they cannot do it without consent or permission.

660 That is a big difference. It is a very big difference. Now, Madam Speaker, hon. Members will know because it is been said publicly that in fact it is been said by the Hon. the Father of the House that the police have legitimately and illegitimately in the past under different leadership permitted Spanish operations in Gibraltar. Permitted Spanish operations in Gibraltar.

665 We have had proper mutual legal assistance where Spanish police have come to Gibraltar out of uniform, identified with *el chaleco*, the vest, and been with our Gibraltar Police. Our Gibraltar Police kicks down the door and there is a Spanish police officer with them coming into the House. Those images have been on GBC. Have not they seen them? Those images have been released by press release of the Royal Gibraltar Police.

The proper mutual legal assistance provisions that exist today. There have been instances where the Royal Gibraltar Police has permitted operations which have not been within the mutual legal assistance provisions. That is what the Hon. the Father of the House has talked about.

670 So, Madam Speaker, no red lines have been transgressed. There are no boots on the ground and if after this they think there is, Madam Speaker, it is up to them how they vote.

675 I would not vote for the motion but they can vote for the motion assured by the fact that the hawk of hawks is voting for the motion because he believes, having seen the plans, having considered the same treaty, that there are no boots on the ground. That no red lines have been crossed and our red lines are the ones we are talking about. They have not set out any red lines in this.

680 We set them out and when we set them out, they are not just red, they are crimson. So they can have that assurance, Madam Speaker. Wherever they have not read that somebody will be disarmed, they should not for one moment reach the conclusion that actually they will be armed because arming requires specific consent. So the absence of reference to arming means not armed. I am surprised that they have suggested the opposite.

685 They have actually set up where we have seen in other arrangements where people are going to be armed, there is a specific reference on how they are going to be armed and how those arms are going to be provided. Of course, because otherwise you cannot be armed. If there is silence, you cannot be armed but do they know how people are armed in Gibraltar today? Are they aware of how foreign police officers are armed in Gibraltar today? Or do they want to approach this debate on the basis of the fiction that there is never been an armed foreign police officer in Gibraltar? Huh? Yeah, they want to approach it in that way without knowing or they would like to know.

690 Madam Speaker there are circumstances in which the Gibraltar police are armed. Of course there are circumstances in which the Gibraltar police are armed. There are circumstances in which my personal protection officers have been armed. It is very uncomfortable. However, I am not talking about the Royal Gibraltar Police. I am talking about foreign police forces in Gibraltar armed.

695 When a foreign dignitary comes into Gibraltar, the Commissioner of Police is empowered under our laws as they are today to grant permission for people to bring arms into Gibraltar depending on the risk assessment that is done by the Royal Gibraltar Police, the circumstances that may be relevant, the seniority of the individual involved. I mean, if you have an ambassador, let us take it no higher than that, if you have an ambassador of a particularly controversial state at a particularly controversial moment that comes with their own security detail, do a number of members think that those people have not been armed when they have been in Gibraltar? We have a different allergic reaction to the Metropolitan Police. We might not even consider it a foreign service, but it is a non-jurisdictional police service. We have members of the British Royal Family here. Weapons are brought. Permission has to be granted by the Royal Gibraltar Police, by the Commissioner of Police. It cannot be otherwise. Otherwise that is illegal.

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705 We are not going to bring a law to this Parliament as we bring laws to this Parliament to give effect to this treaty to say that anybody should be armed in Gibraltar if they'd like to be without the consent of the Royal Gibraltar Police and the Commissioner of Police who is the party that grants those permissions. The thing that I would never have done as Leader of the Opposition, as Member of the Opposition, or as an individual sitting in Main Street having coffee at the Piazza is  
710 to say, look, whether or not he has crossed his line, for me, the alternative is so bad that even if they are going to be armed I am going to hold my nose and vote yes. In particular as a member of this House I would say if they are going to be armed I am going to vote no. Whatever the alternative.

Hon. Members can now have the confidence I am telling you they are not going to be armed. If they are ever armed it is because the Commissioner of Police in Gibraltar is going to agree that they should be armed. Look, we might all agree that there are circumstances when that should happen. There are circumstances where we might agree Moroccan Police should be armed in Gibraltar because there are circumstances in which there might be a joint operation between Gibraltar Police and Moroccan Police and we might all agree they should be armed.

720 For example, something easy. We might be graced with the honour of a visit by a member of the Moroccan Royal Family or the Saudi Royal Family. Of course, the Commissioner of Police is very likely then to consent to that senior individual's security detail being armed or a joint operation involving drugs or anything else. Terrorism. There are circumstances in which these things would properly happen even in a situation where you have a sovereignty dispute. Even then  
725 and despite the psychological problem that we all have, rightly, with Spanish Police and Guardia Civil. Which we do have. It is their fault that we have it. It is not ours. I have been blue in the face explaining this in the treaty negotiations. The other thing the hon. Gentleman has said here and many other things that we have said there and we have prevailed on because Spain, modern Spain, modern progressive Spain, the modern progressive Spain that we like. Right? As a neighbour. Not as anything else, but as a neighbour.

Even that modern progressive Spain has to understand that the psychology of the Gibraltarian is because of ancient, non-progressive, dictatorial, right-wing fascist Spain. They have not yet quite got us over the line of that type of behaviour. So none of us here are going to vote yes for armed boots on the ground outside of this Joint facility.

735 So they can vote yes knowing that if that was an eventuality, we would vote no. Despite them having said that they would vote yes even though they feared that that was the eventuality. That is a big, big dividing line that is opening up in Gibraltar politics here but Madam Speaker, to an extent, to an extent, we have heard it all before. We have heard it all before. Again, I am defaulting to the pugilistic.

740 I really am trying to extend to hon. Members explanations that will make them comfortable. I apologise if I am doing so in a slightly conflictive way. But, look, the Hon. Father of the House stole my best line when he told the Hon. Leader of the Opposition that all of the things that he was saying about this treaty which seemed problematic were like nothing compared to the way that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition described the tax treaty.

745 When issues came in relation to the tax treaty, I mean, it seemed as if the Gibraltar economy was about to collapse. The hon. Gentleman said that this was going to stop growth in the Gibraltar economy. Well, if it stopped any growth, as the Hon. Father of the House said, it was growth we would not want to have.

750 The Gibraltar economy has continued to grow, buffeted by the reality of Brexit uncertainty and world issues since then. Not least the Liz Truss budget. However, the Gibraltar economy has continued to grow despite the tax treaty.

He was wrong on the tax treaty, Madam Speaker and, during the course of the last General Election, he almost came round to it. Because, in an interview weeks before the general election, or I think the week before the General Election, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition at last said,  
755 look, yes, I see now that the tax treaty was one of the building blocks of the process leading to the

withdrawal agreement and this negotiation. Of course it was. It was not economy destroying. Far from it. Far from it.

I hope, Madam Speaker, that in the generosity of spirit that characterises him, when we are not here, no, no, no, no, when we are not here, not when we are here, there is absolutely no generosity of spirit when we are here. However, in the generosity of spirit that characterises him when we are not here, and perhaps when we can no longer be here at all, go back to having lunch on the odd Saturday in the hinterland, as long as the frontier remains traversable, he can say to me, you know, the tax treaty thing worked. This treaty worked. In the same way because I know he will not hold a grudge if this works. I know that he will wish that it does work because if they were ever to win a General Election, and I hope they will not, and I believe they will not, I think Adolfo Canepa's position was the one that they should heed the most. Running Gibraltar with a quasi-closed Frontier, with all of the consequences of that we will have on public finance, you know, will be very difficult indeed. It is a completely different Gibraltar. I do not think the Gibraltarians will be any less demanding. Even with the public finances not there.

Well, the thing that fascinated me the most, and the thing that I really started with, which I want to develop now a little, Madam Speaker, is that I understood immediately that Mr Bossano... Mr. Bossino, I am confusing them, (*laughter*) I am confusing them, Madam Speaker, I am confusing them. The minute that Mr. Bossino got up, I realised what was playing out, and that I should have seen coming. It was obvious.

What I saw play out in front of me was Córdoba all over again. Literally Córdoba all over again. In 2006, Damon Bossino was, in the GSD, ready to become the candidate for 2011, ready to take over from Peter Caruana when the time came. Supporting Peter Caruana on the Córdoba Agreements, as was Daniel Feetham. Yeah. Writing in the Chronicle, saying that Córdoba was the way forward and Keith Azopardi was the trigger-happy leader of the PDP. Ready to come out, within hours of the publication of the Córdoba Agreements, saying that they were a sell-out, and treachery, and holding a press conference talking about how bad they were. Attacking even the hawk of hawks, because the GSLP did not come out fast enough, condemning the Córdoba process.

Of course, sitting next to him was Nick Cruz, as he is this morning in the Chronicle, making the same argument that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition made yesterday, which was not the argument that the Hon. Mr Bossino made today. I should have seen it coming. There is a fault line now in the GSD, which is demonstrated by the way that this debate has been conducted, and their nervous laughter now, which is exactly what we saw play out before us in 2006.

All those who were pro-Córdoba on the one hand, all those who were in the PDP against Córdoba on the other.

Madam Speaker, in 2002, Peter Hain called us dinosaurs. In 2006, Peter Caruana and Daniel Feetham called the now Leader of the GSD and us dinosaurs for not accepting the Córdoba arrangements.

Well look, Madam Speaker, this is the only world in which the dinosaurs survived and the others disappeared. It is as if the meteorite was sucked out of the Parliament and the dinosaurs came back to dominate. That is the reality of what we are seeing here because what we saw in 2006 was the current Leader of the GSD criticising the then Leader of the GSD only to come under attack by his predecessor as Leader of the GSD. I will unpack that for you a little, Madam Speaker. That is to say, the current Leader of the GSD, Mr Azopardi, attacking the then Leader of the GSD, Mr Caruana, as he then was, to have Mr. Feetham, who is his direct predecessor in leadership of the GSD, attacking him in a newspaper article in the Chronicle, where we actually got attacked almost on the rebound *de rebote*. The battle was between them, the PDP and the GSD. The attack on us was we were not quick enough to come out to attack the Córdoba agreements. That is why the Hon. Mr Feetham has said, the other Hon. Mr Feetham has said, this was like listening to arguments from different political parties, Madam Speaker. It was really a remarkable thing.

However, look, Madam Speaker, Arcadia said, jam cannot be stirred back. That is true. You cannot undo Brexit. You cannot go back to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2016 and undo Brexit. You have got to deal with it.

You have got to say, this is jam. What do I do with jam? How can I enjoy jam?

810 Well, Madam Speaker, it is not easy. This has not been easy. None of the politics of Gibraltar is easy.

When you are Leader of the Opposition, and I have been, when you are in Opposition, it is hard as well. However, talk is cheap. You can say what you like in Opposition, because it is almost inconsequential. Except, perhaps, in a debate like this, that comes around every 50 or so years.

815 The leader of the House, the father of the House, is the only person who has been around for two of them. Nature does not usually allow us to be around for two of these types of movements. However, the father of the House is a nature-defying hawk of hawks. Right? It does matter, in a situation like this, what even an Opposition says.

820 Hon. Members have to be careful with what they say. So I want to take them through the things that they have said, to tell them why they are wrong, in the best possible sense, and therefore why they can be comfortable.

I told the House, Madam Speaker, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June last year, that it was actually in the same way as it had been His Majesty's Government of Gibraltar that had proposed Frontex during the New Year's Eve Framework Agreement discussions, it was actually His Majesty's Government of Gibraltar that proposed that Frontex should be removed from the equation. You should not be surprised at that. I said it in answer to a question in this House. This is what I said in Parliament on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2025.

830 It was His Majesty's Government of Gibraltar who proposed that Frontex officers were no longer to carry out Schengen Checks under the Treaty. This decision was taken as negotiations advanced on the precise role that Frontex could play, and when agreement was reached on the detail of how the Schengen Checks will be carried out, and in particular when agreement was reached on how the new facility will be built at Gibraltar Airport.

835 Why? Well, because we agreed that with Spain and the United Kingdom but when the European Commission became involved, the European Commission insisted that Frontex would not act without Spain supporting them. So the whole purpose of Frontex acting on its own would not survive that.

840 Then the position had been that Frontex would be at the airport and at the port, and that controls would be carried out there and our response was that that would happen in the four years if Frontex was doing it, but not after the four years if Spain did it and that after the four years, the only way the agreement could survive was if all the things that were done outside of the airport were taken to the airport and put in the joint facility.

845 What we managed to agree with our negotiating counterparts was that we should accelerate to what would have been the acceptable position of the Government of Gibraltar at the end of the four year period and that everything should be done at the airport inside the joint facility. That is what happened. That is what we have agreed. That is how we stopped them being at the Port, Madam Speaker.

850 In any event, Madam Speaker, 99% of what is going to happen is going to happen at an e-gate anyway. You are not going to see an officer. You are going to see a machine and more and more. So the configuration of the joint facility now permits for all these things to be done as we would have proposed it should have been done at the end of the initial four year period that was envisaged under the New Year's Eve framework agreement.

855 in doing so what we have done is not just get rid of Frontex but also get rid of the uncertainty of whether or not that would be accepted by our negotiating counterparts at the end of the four years. They have accepted it now.

Madam Speaker, when it comes to hot pursuit, we have to understand that there are law enforcement issues here. Without a Frontier Before we get to the thorny issue which is Spaniards

860 coming in this direction without a Frontier how do hon. Members feel about somebody being able to pick up a child in Main Street, run with them, put them in a car and start heading towards Spain. The Royal Gibraltar Police not being able to chase them. I mean the hot pursuit issue is not just in one direction, it is reciprocal. How do hon. Members feel about somebody being able to grab something in Main Street, a bag of money, steal something in a shop in Main Street, run and the Royal Gibraltar Police not being able to chase them. That person gets over the line into Spain where the line is and looks at the Royal Gibraltar Police and says:

865 Ya estoy en España

870 Because that is what not agreeing hot pursuit means. I mean there is a live political issue, I will deal with it in a moment. However, absent the live political issue how do they feel on a law enforcement basis, because when you are in Government you have to put your thinking cap on in that respect, about the Royal Gibraltar Police not being able to do a hot pursuit of a child abduction if it happens or of something involving the taking of property or the committing of another crime and not being able to get over the line and grab that person, subject to the jurisdiction of the Spanish Police, because if you are in Spain and you grab them you then have to hand over your weapons, if as a Royal Gibraltar Police officer you are carrying weapons, hand over your vehicle, hand over the person that you have detained and go to the *Juzgado de Guardia* and confirm why you have apprehended that person who would then be subject to an extradition to Gibraltar. Do they think it would be a good idea not to have hot pursuit? Or are we only going to think politically about hot pursuit and what it means in one direction? Of course not because look, 880 at the end of the day, we are all law abiding individuals, we want to see safety and security in Gibraltar not just with cameras, we want to see all of that.

When it happens in reverse, do we want to believe that there should not be a right of hot pursuit? Should we, Madam Speaker, have curtailed the right of hot pursuit to no more than 50km in Gibraltar? I hope that we had 50km, no? I mean that is halfway up Tangier Ville Port. The 14km 885 of the Straits, the 2.5km of Gibraltar and 30km in from Tangier Ville, that is 50km.

Or is it that we were going to say that it should be curtailed to 500m? Is it not understood geographically, Madam Speaker, that Gibraltar's a funnel and once you come in, you are north of the runway, with the runway barriers and the tunnel barrier and that we are going to have a remarkably high police presence and law enforcement presence north of the runway and that we 890 have to be notified, otherwise the pursuit cannot continue. Notification will lead to permission and that when the Spanish officers stop, and I explained this during my first address, Madam Speaker, when the Spanish officers stop, they have to hand over their weapons to their Gibraltarian counterparts. They have to hand over the vehicle and hand over the person that they have apprehended on the isthmus. On the isthmus. If that is not recognition of jurisdiction, 895 without prejudice to Article 2, I do not know what is. That is what they have agreed.

To go to the Gibraltar Courts. No Spanish police officer has ever gone to the Gibraltar Courts, Madam Speaker. Do hon. Members remember that? No Spanish police officer has ever gone to the Gibraltar Courts. Here, they are saying they will go to the Gibraltar Courts. Recognition of our jurisdiction, that is remarkable, Madam Speaker.

900 So they can vote yes, knowing all of these things, because they are there in the treaty. They can get comfortable. This is not a red line crossed by us, Madam Speaker. Although some might accuse others of having crossed the traditional red lines. Not us. Not us because if done with recognition of all of these things, which is how it has been done, Madam Speaker, that is normality. With or without a sovereignty claim. Normality for the purposes of ensuring that criminals do not 905 get away with it.

Although I doubt this will ever happen because we are going to have so many 4x4 patrols along there. They have to tell us before that we will help them by blocking the entrance and the arrest can happen there. We will help them, Madam Speaker, because if they get in here and they have

910 to hand over their weapons, hand over their vehicle and come to the courts, that is not going to be good for the Spanish officer that does that.

So, Madam Speaker, when it comes to the issue of residence permits, I think I was very clear in my main presentation that these issues, although they will be done by Spain, are not being done *qua* Spain. They are being done *qua* Schengen.

915 So, when the Leader of the Opposition says, before issuing or renewing a residence permit, Gibraltar will need to notify Spain and will not be allowed to issue or renew such a permit if Spain objects under certain grounds, a thing that his PDP sidekick also raises in the Chronicle today, those were his words, it is not Spain deciding, Madam Speaker, it is the Schengen area as a whole, because the information is channelled through Spain, because Spain is the neighbouring member state. It is Spain acting as a proxy for the Schengen states and it is making the same compulsory  
920 consultation that exists between the Schengen states.

The Hon. Mr Bossino said, I do not know about, I have not had a chance to research this question of it being the highest hurdle in European law. Well, I will help you Madam Speaker. The Grand Chamber of the Court of Justice of the European Union, in joint cases C331/16 and C 366/16, K and HF, made the decisions that the reasons must be proportionate and shall be based  
925 exclusively on the personal conduct of the individual concerned, which must represent a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat affecting one of the fundamental interests of society. The highest hurdle for denial of free movement in European law.

That says that even in the case of a person excluded from refugee status on the basis that they committed a war crime, that alone cannot automatically lead to a finding that the person  
930 represents a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat affecting one of the fundamental interests of society. So, on public policy grounds, I mean I cannot imagine who would want to come here that would fail this test and we would still want to see come here.

That is not loss of control, Madam Speaker, by any stretch of the imagination and then, Madam Speaker, this question of the of the joint patrols. Yes, I said no to those. Of course I would said no  
935 to those. When the Hon. Leader of the Opposition then, Mr Feetham, said whether we were looking at joint patrols by the Guardia Civil, *et cetera*. In other words, the Guardia Civil patrolling its vessel in our waters.

I have to say, Madam Speaker, I think Spain has shown an element of sensitivity here to the psychological issues that we explained to them because they have agreed that we should have  
940 vessels which are neutrally branded so that they are not provocative to the populations of one side or the other. There might be lots of *Vox* voters, Madam Speaker, who would be very provoked by the idea of a Royal Gibraltar police vessel having jurisdiction all the way up to Tarifa or to Estepona. Understand that? There is a joint sensitivity there. So, the patrols will be done not them in their boats, us in ours, and us permitting that they come into our waters, *et cetera*. They will be  
945 done in one boat with us together. It is a different kettle of fish, Madam Speaker. It is a different kettle of fish.

We genuinely do not believe that that transgresses any red lines. I will tell the hon. Gentleman that the Cabinet met, the Deputy Chief Minister and I raised this idea because it was a Gibraltarian  
950 idea with the Cabinet. The Cabinet and the hawk of hawks thought it was a very good idea that did not cross any of our red lines.

So, Madam Speaker, we come here not with our red lines exposed, but with our red lines intact and assuming that theirs are the same as ours, they can have the comfort that we had. That this does not cross red lines at all, Madam Speaker. None whatsoever. Neither of a person born in the 1940s or a person born in 1987. That is the reality. The hon. Members can vote yes on our  
955 standards, not theirs.

On the standard that the red lines are not crossed and that there are no boots on the ground. Not on the standard of having to hold their noses because red lines are crossed, but they are going to vote yes anyway. Madam Speaker, when we consider issues like the Córdoba Arrangements, hon. Members must also be honest and again, this is not me, I hope, defaulting on the pugilistic.

960 This is trying to do an analysis. An analysis on which I might have been with the now leader of the GSD. The now Leader of the Opposition because when the Córdoba Arrangements were announced in 2006, what we cannot forget, Madam Speaker, what we cannot forget is that they were the fruit of a meeting of the Brussels process. It is important not to forget that.

965 A joint press release was issued by the British and Foreign Commonwealth Office, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government of Gibraltar on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2004 and that joint press release was a bilateral reference, which said this:

970 On the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2004, the British and Spanish Foreign Ministers, Jack Straw and Miguel Angel Moratinos, made a joint statement in Madrid on which the Chief Minister of Gibraltar Peter Caruana had been consulted and had separately expressed his agreement. Accordingly and without prejudice to their respective positions, the Governments of the United Kingdom, the Kingdom of Spain and Gibraltar, now confirmed the establishment of a three-sided forum for dialogue on Gibraltar, separate from the Brussels process.

975 The last meeting of the Brussels process was not in the last century, it was on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2004. I think that was the analysis of the Leader of the Opposition now. It was our analysis. That is what launched the trilateral. The trilateral is what brought us to Córdoba.

980 So, when you look at Córdoba, and you approve Córdoba, and that is the GSD I have sitting opposite me, and the GSD did Córdoba, Córdoba is a child of Brussels and Brussels is a child of Lisbon and Strasbourg, and all of those refer to the 1967 resolutions about the transfer of sovereignty to Spain.

985 We were against Córdoba. The Hon. Mr Azopardi was against Córdoba. The GSD was in favour of Córdoba and did Córdoba. That must be born in mind and Córdoba, which the people of Gibraltar accepted in a General Election in 2007, and we have to have that regard to Córdoba, although it was undone by the *Partido Popular*, but the people of Gibraltar accepted it in 2007 by the slimmest of margins.

Córdoba was, for example, about flights to Spain. It was not about flights to Europe and the Schengen area. Córdoba was about giving a Spanish company, giving a Spanish company 50% of the running of a company to run Gibraltar Airport.

990 So the product of Brussels, you could not get more of a bastard birth, Madam Speaker, in the dictionary definition of the meaning of the word, is a deal not about flights to Europe and which involves the Government of Gibraltar giving 50% of the company that runs the airport to Aena. To Aena, which is owned by the Spanish state, by 50%.

995 This deal does none of that. This deal does none of that. It does not come from the Brussels process. It is unrelated, therefore, even by the thinnest hair of the dog's tail to the 1967 resolutions of the General Assembly.

What it does is it says, okay, let us agree that we are going to grant the tender together. If we do not grant the tender, well, I mean, our view is that Gibraltar Terminal Management will always run this airport, not least because it loses a huge amount of money. Not many people will be interested in running it, even if more flights come.

1000 However, anybody, and on this, I am sure that the former Chief Minister and I, who have a strong working relationship now, continue to disagree but Córdoba does not even begin to reach the ankles of what the Deputy Chief Minister has been able to negotiate, for he has run most of the negotiation of the airport in relation to this treaty. Look, this treaty is the bastard child of Brexit. Bad enough but I would rather the bastard child of Brexit than the bastard child of Brussels because Brexit does not talk about my sovereignty being handed over to Spain on the basis of its territorial integrity being re-established under the 1969 resolutions because that is what it does. That is what Brussels does, because it is linked to Strasbourg, and it is linked to Lisbon, and that link to the 1967 resolutions. It is linked to Córdoba because the trilateral is born from Brussels and gives birth to Córdoba.

1010 There is a golden thread that runs through all of that, Madam Speaker, which is clearer than daylight, Madam Speaker, clearer than daylight. Anyway, Madam Speaker, all of that

demonstrates that the deal on the airport, done by the Deputy Chief Minister, is a better deal than Córdoba, and we should all be happy with that.

1015 First of all, because as I told the House, it is not just about flights to Spain, it is about flights to the whole of Europe. Córdoba was only about that potentially happening.

Secondly, because it does not have any of those problems related to the Brussels process. So, Madam Speaker, I do not think there can be any argument that any of what is before the House can genuinely cause hon. Members opposite to have to hold their noses before they can vote for this.

1020 Look, they might have agonised for five hours, because it is a big document to go through, but after they had our explanations about how we had agonised over this for five years to get the right results, they can vote with the comfort that the hawk of hawks is voting for it, and all of us are voting for it. However, of course, look, we have all agreed, and it has been our position, before it was public in the Chronicle yesterday or Monday, that all of this had to come with a get-out clause  
1025 because the Concordat is not first thought of when Sir Peter writes an opinion in the Chronicle on Monday.

I mean, as the Hon. Leader of the Opposition knows, there have been very advanced drafts of the Concordat for weeks already, and indeed, these have been discussions between us and the UK Government on what had to be in the Concordat for three years and the termination clause  
1030 for a year and a half. Right? I will come to where we are on the Concordat and the exit clause in a minute, but I want to do something that Julie Andrews recommended, Madam Speaker.  
(Laughter)

I want to start at the very beginning, which is a very good place to start, because if I go to the termination clause, I am starting at the end. One of the best indicia of sovereignty and of control  
1035 and of jurisdiction, indeed, the key indicia is actually the start button. That is what we have in this House today.

That is what we have in this House today. When the Hon. Mr Borge puts the question, Madam Speaker, when you put the question in the Hon. Mr Borge, calls our names, we will be saying go, subject to the caveat contained in the amendment that we have agreed.

1040 Let us not take that for granted. I do not know whether hon. Members are aware of what the Spanish Leader of the Opposition has said today. I mean, the leader of the *Partido Popular* in Spain has today said this, and I will speak in Spanish and translate into English, Madam Speaker, so it is on the record.

He was in *Nueva Economía* Forum, Madam Speaker, and he said this:

1045 *Bueno, y habremos visto que el Reino Unido gana y España pierde.*

Well, we have seen that the United Kingdom wins and Spain loses.

1050 *No sé si el derby de esta noche,*

When referring to the Basque derby and the Copa del Rey,

I do not know whether tonight's derby,

1055 *cómo va a quedar,*

How it is going to end.

1060 *Pero si queda con tanta claridad, es que habrá haber goleada.*

However, if it ends as clearly as this, it is that one side is going to really score lots of goals against the other.

*España pierde y el Reino Unido gana.*

1065

Spain loses and the United Kingdom wins.

*Y Gibraltar se convierte en un territorio de la Unión Europea cuando el Reino Unido ha decidido salirse de la Unión.*

1070

Gibraltar becomes a territory of the European Union when the United Kingdom has decided to leave the European Union.

So far so good. We do not think that Spain loses here. We do not think that the United Kingdom wins. We think this is a compromise that works for everyone. This is not about scoring goals. This is about securing livelihoods, making sure that human relations endure. However, this is what he said next:

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We have spoken clearly to the European People's Party. We have told them and we have told all European capitals this deal must be considered in the Congress of People's Deputies in Madrid.

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*Lo hemos declarado muy claramente al Partido Popular Europeo. Lo hemos declarado a las cancillerías europeas. Este acuerdo se tiene que ventilar en el Congreso de los Diputados.*

Why is he saying that, Madam Speaker? Because the start button is not in Madrid. The start button is in Brussels on the European side. Here we must not be blinded by the fact that we must also have the possibility and the stop button into forgetting that we have the start button. That is hugely important because constitutionally in the United Kingdom Gibraltar legal order it demonstrates that this happens if it happens because this Parliament votes that it should. That therefore the representatives of the people of Gibraltar determine that it should. So absent the issues in relation to the termination which we will come to in a moment... We have to remember that we are demonstrating today the maturity of the relationship that we now have between the United Kingdom and Gibraltar and the extent of the control that is recognised that we should have in whether or not these issues should come into play or not at all.

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There was another way of doing it Madam Speaker, which I recognise that hon. Members had represented. I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for coming to this House and being agreeable to supporting this motion that will in effect start the process of ratification for the United Kingdom subject to the laying of the concordat as we have all agreed and not taking the position that they took during the course of the General Election campaign which was that they would put any agreement to a referendum I mean the position of hon. Members opposite was this:

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A referendum on any negotiated agreement the safe and beneficial agreement that we would seek to conclude with the EU would not detrimentally affect our sovereignty, jurisdiction or control but as a further safeguard we will put any agreement that we negotiate to a referendum so that you will have a final say on whether it remains in place.

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Madam Speaker that was not in our view the right policy to take, a referendum got us into this mess, this is 1,118 pages Madam Speaker. Asking the public to make a decision about this is in my view Madam Speaker as foolish as it was to ask the public to make the decision about all of the foundational treaties of the European Union and every directive and regulation ever issued which is what the Brexit referendum was.

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Look we are elected Madam Speaker in a representative democracy to negotiate and to agree there are circumstances where the referendum can make sense but if we are saying as we are saying and as they were saying in their manifesto that the deal does not affect sovereignty, jurisdiction or control why put it to a referendum? It is quite something else if you come back and you say look I am defeated, it is either the precipice or they are offering us this deal which requires us to compromise on sovereignty or jurisdiction or control, only you can say yes to this and I would recommend that you say no because it crosses the red line but I accept that it is an offer and I

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have to put it to you. You could put that to a referendum but if it is not an issue of sovereignty or jurisdiction or control why not put it to a referendum?

1120 It makes no sense so I am saying thank you to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition for not pursuing that line because that would not be a position that would be helpful to any party Madam Speaker. It would not be helpful to any party.

1125 Madam Speaker then the other thing I want to do is deal with this question that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has raised about whether we tried to get free movement so that we did not have the 90 in 180. I thought I had addressed it in my first statement but he did not seem to understand it because we have said repeatedly actually that we did not want free movement. We did not want 180 in 180 because 180 in 180 is to give anybody who is in Spain who would like to come into Gibraltar to live the right to come into Gibraltar to live. We did not want that Madam Speaker.

1130 I want to be clear about that the hon. Gentleman says Lichtenstein does not have the 90 in 180. It is a big difference Madam Speaker not that Lichtenstein is a state and all the rest of it. Lichtenstein is a member of the European Economic Area it is a huge difference. Lichtenstein is not outside the European Economic Area and outside the European Union negotiating a fluidity deal into Schengen. It is in the EEA with Schengen membership of course it is got 180 in 180. We did not want free movement because if we had free movement if we had 180 in 180 then anybody could come and live here and we did not want that Madam Speaker.

1135 A point that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and Mr Sacarello took was to say that businesses need help and businesses need information. Of course it is very easy when you are in Opposition to say that Madam Speaker to try and carry favour with businesses but I do not think anybody can legitimately say that we are not giving businesses help. Indeed we have announced a package of measures there may be more to come in the future we have to be careful with what we do with the public purse here we have to ensure that we are not helping people who are going to do extraordinarily well. We have to help them with a soft landing and we have to help them to ensure that they have the help they need I think that we are doing that but how can anybody say that we do not have information to give or that we are not giving information.

1140 I mean the Hon. Mr Sacarello has asked us to publish frequently asked questions because we have only done so this week actually we did it the week before as soon as the treaty was published on our website the FAQs were there Madam Speaker but we are not giving the information that we have... This is a work in progress we do not yet have all the information because we are working out the information about the technical forms *et cetera* with the European Union. The Attorney General was in Brussels on Wednesday he arrived on Thursday and on Thursday we published the information that we got on Wednesday with the Collector of Customs but we are not Madam Speaker at a national level going to be sharing information with Spain that could be abused because much of the information we are going to share is information we already publish. If not all of it and what we are going to give access to information in real time it is going to be read only information which by the way is information, 96% of the information we are going to give Spain would have anyway. You have got to understand that when you put yourself in this mindset this is customs information about things coming into Gibraltar 96% of what comes into Gibraltar comes through Spain today. So what we are going to give them is what they have because they check the lorry even before we do! So it is almost my way of reconciliation now under these new arrangements they are going to have 100% of the information because it is all going to come through *et cetera*. Not a huge change, 4% change. The read only information we are going to give them corresponds to the information they have of the things that they have checked at their points anyway. It is about reconciliation. Reconciliation that is a good thing.

1155 Madam Speaker I am not going to address the arguments about the bilateral reservation of sovereignty although I have an element of sympathy with them I think that is not for this debate. Yes this agreement can be terminated on 12 months' notice but all agreements can be terminated. All treaties can be terminated even the treaty of Utrecht involves the potential for termination

1170 which as the Hon. Father of the House says we do not recognise but at the time it was written it was written with termination and first preference clauses.

The European treaty is different because it is a treaty that people plug into but there is something called article 50. Our debate today is the fruit of somebody else having pressed the termination provision which is two years in the Treaty of Rome in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

1175 But yes Madam Speaker, the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition is right to agree with us that this is a seminal moment and he was right to quote the same extracts of the debate on the European Communities Act 1972 which I quoted the week before. I mean it is not usual in this House that somebody reads the same quote that somebody had read the week before but it is that important. I mean the Hon. Leader of the Opposition does it by saying it could all have been  
1180 better if we had gone together to negotiate all of this just like Hassan and Isola. Madam Speaker these days I wonder very little onto social media. My curiosity has got the better of me in the past week after the publication of the Treaty text.

Madam Speaker I do hope that the hon. Gentleman is not allowing his speeches to be written by some of the things that he sees on social media because look he and I have a Parliamentary  
1185 fractious relationship but we have a good relationship it could have been better depending on the ebbing and the flowing of the issues but we have had a very good relationship in the past I have no doubt at a personal level we will continue to have a very good relationship in the future. We will go back together no doubt sometime in the future to *La Jarandilla* to have *lomo con patata y huevo* and to laugh at all of this as we have done often in the past.

1190 Hassan and Isola could not stand each other. To be clear when Hassan and Isola went together they went together on the issue which was the lowest common denominator the lowest common denominator. Let us go to the United Nations together and say that we have the right of self-determination they did it, they did it once in one speech right. Let us not pretend that that is what would have led us we have a much better relationship and we might have had *lomo con patata y huevo*  
1195 in Brussels and come back as large as I sometimes come back for five years to negotiate these things. It is a myth. It is one of those myths of Gibraltar politics:

*Hassan y Isola fueron juntos*

1200 To say the most basic thing together because Hassan and Isola would not have gone very far to say many things together not on the dockyard, for example, not on integration or not integration Madam Speaker that there were deeper rifts perhaps and bigger differences on foreign policy between Hassan and Isola than there are between the hon. Gentleman and me. Between the hon. Gentleman and anyone on this side so I mean that myth may work on Facebook  
1205 but we should not bring it to this place where when we put it and subject it to analysis that is the reality of what we are going to have to say to each other.

But Madam Speaker I think I have dealt with most of the issues that the hon. Gentleman has raised and I hope that I have given him sufficient comfort in respect of those issues in the context of what is necessary for the debate but the one thing that the former leader of the GSD the leader  
1210 of the Córdoba faction of the GSD, if I may put it that way, said also in his opinion, a piece in the Chronicle on Monday:

Flies in the face of the argument of the Hassan-Isola argument

1215 and it flies in the face of the argument of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition which was that if we had gone together maybe some of these transgressions of red lines that we perceive and are concerned about but say he did not say that they happened and which I have now given him the comfort did not happen might not have had to happen because we would have been there together. That assumes that he is tougher than us which he is not Madam Speaker he is not there

1220 is one hawk of hawks and we are his baby falcons and baby hawks and he has chosen to sit there and not here, right?

But what Sir Peter says, in his opinion, and he is still the spiritual leader of the GSD, or at least the leader of the Cordoba faction of the GSD obviously, is there could have been no better deal negotiated given the hand that we were dealt. So actually the former leader of the GSD is saying  
1225 the current leader of the GSD stop making that argument because this is the best deal possible! That is the reality. So, if he is unhappy with aspects of this deal, he joins us in unhappiness because as I have told him and I said, during the course of my initial approach to this motion, I do not agree with Sir Peter that the prize is Schengen access.

The prize here is doing a deal which avoids a hard Brexit and does not require us to cross any red lines that is the prize. The prize that is the prize that is the prize.  
1230

Anyway for dealing with the contribution by the Hon. Mr Clinton. I have to say Madam Speaker that I thought it was not less than generous I thought it was, but this is a matter for you, bordering on the unparliamentary to refer to the treaty as a turd rolled in glitter. I also thought it relatively distasteful. I find the hon. Gentleman's oratory not to be compelling but I find his vocabulary to  
1235 usually be better than that. I was particularly surprised when he ended his address saying that in the end he thought that this was a treaty worth doing and that he saw it as a cake that he would be eating. It is the first time in parliamentary history anybody said that they are going to eat a turd rolled in glitter or otherwise but that is the journey on which Mr Clinton took us. He took us from turd to cake in less than 20 minutes. He brings a different meaning to having to hold your nose  
1240 before you vote for this Madam Speaker but I have to say Madam Speaker that none of what he said raised concerns with us because I think I would have been able to show him that all of the issues about information sharing *et cetera* are things that we are perfectly comfortable with they do not cross lines and they do not affect the Gibraltar economy in any way and that everything that we have done is designed to benefit Gibraltar. Indeed, he just needs to read the Spanish press  
1245 to see that there are a lot of people with their noses out of joint in Spain because they do not think that we are being made to sap at the altar of equalisation, of indirect taxation *et cetera* in the way that people wished and we have not been made to sap at that altar.

In relation to this issue of the transitional period leading to the indefinite period which is the full application of VAT *et cetera* including on services *et cetera*, the hon. Gentleman has to realise  
1250 that that is behind a wall. In other words, it is behind a veto. We have a veto on that ever applying. Now I cannot imagine any circumstances at the moment where we would wish that to apply but I can give him an imaginary set of circumstances in which we might wish it to apply and if he is interested in spending a minute with me analysing that I will.

What happens if the United Kingdom rejoins the European Union? And what happens if there  
1255 is a particularly difficult Spanish Government at the time and they do not offer us the options that we were offered in 1972?

Well, first answer, we stay as we are and that we could have so we stay as we are we do not agree to go into the indefinite period, we stay as we are.

Let us add a complication. United Kingdom goes into the European Union, has a single market  
1260 in services in the European Union, we cannot continue to have a single market in services with the United Kingdom when it is in the European Union because it is now in the European Union in the same way as when they joined they have to stop buying lamb from New Zealand, they can no longer take gaming services and insurance services from Gibraltar. That might then start to be  
1265 circumstances in which we might want to trigger the presently untriggerable, in our minds, and say well we have to go there and we have to have access to the market in services in the United Kingdom by having access through the European Union by going in the indefinite period and having VAT on our services, because by then going up in some way because we might not have to go up, because if Luxembourg is still at 17, you accept VAT, you still stick, then you have the whole panoply of VAT available under the directive you could even go to 15 and you are still not at the  
1270 same rates as the UK and the European Union the rest of the European Union.

1275 So unpalatable as that might appear at the moment which I assume is what the hon. Gentleman refers to as turdish time and affliction of it might turn that into cake just like he turned turd to cake in 20 minutes. I do not think it can be done in 20 minutes but this actually which might appear at the moment to be a poison chalice might be a trap door that we might all want to escape through in the future.

So Madam Speaker, the hon. Gentleman is wrong to think that we have given up our import duty, we are just going to call it something else and we are going to apply different rules to the fluctuations that it may apply but as we have told the House in the past and I think I have told the public we anticipate that that means that we will make an extra £25 million a year.

1280 Now when it comes to the estimates, because we follow the views of the Father of the House on this, we will be a little more cautious because one thing to have an estimate, it is another thing to see how things actually perform. The estimate can only be based on saying what if the things that have been imported in Gibraltar in the last year, and say for the past three years, so you do the exercise and you get an average, had been imported applying the 15% because it is the first year the 5% and the 0% that number gives you an average of about 25 million but if you do that, you are going to be a little bit over optimistic in our view because the numbers of things sold will change, perhaps you will sell more, much more of some things and much less of others. So this year we will take a very cautious approach to that for the estimates and you will see that we will probably put it in at somewhere between half or just over half of that estimate and then we will see how all that performs. But we are not giving up import duty we are calling in something else and we are putting it up and when I was elected Madam Speaker there were many things that were at 12% import duty and we brought it down. So really the exercise that people are going to go through, if they go back to when I was elected the huge increase in duty that there is going to be in a few days is 3% because things that were at 12 and are now at 3 or are now at 0 were at 12 when I was elected and we had a market on it. A very good market on it.

1295 Madam Speaker I do want to deal with the issue of the Concordat a little on the termination because yesterday in the debate in the House of Lords, Lord Barrow said this:

1300 My Lords I warmly welcome the conclusion of these negotiations, this has been years in the making, and I know from first-hand experience how tough the negotiations were. However this is a UK-EU agreement, how will the Government of Gibraltar be involved in decision making if it comes into force? What will happen for instance if the Government of Gibraltar feel that the agreement is no longer delivering the hoped for economic and other benefits?

1305 Lord Collins says this Lord Collins Madam Speaker who is well known to those of us on the socialist benches in this House he is to us Ray from the old TGWU and Unite and he is well known to Gibraltar, he comes to Gibraltar a lot. Lord Collins says this:

1310 I thank the noble Lord and I hope that I made the position clear at the beginning. To repeat Minister Doughty wrote to the Chief Minister yesterday making these principles absolutely clear. In fact the Chief Minister read out to the Gibraltar Parliament the principles about which we have been clear throughout the negotiations. Nothing about Gibraltar without Gibraltar. The agreement has been negotiated to ensure the long term continued security and prosperity of Gibraltar. The United Kingdom will exercise its powers on the termination or suspension of its obligations under the agreement only following the full consultation with the Government of Gibraltar whose wishes and views we will follow. That is the principle to which we shall stick rigidly.

1315 I think that is a very helpful way of putting it Madam Speaker and now in the Hansard of the House of Lords. Madam Speaker there is a lot of comment in Gibraltar and elsewhere about this treaty. Hon. Members should know that it is worth looking at what is being said in Spain. Especially in the question of these intrusive measures that Mr Clinton and the Leader of the Opposition referred to which I hope I have given them the confidence on now.

1320 There was a headline this morning that I thought it would be useful to bring to this House which is this one in one of the papers in the region that is not known for its love of Gibraltar and it says this:

1325 Gibraltar enters the EU but the EU does not enter Gibraltar.

*Gibraltar entra en la Unión Europea pero la Unión Europea no entra en Gibraltar.*

And indeed it goes on to say:

1330

The treaty on Gibraltar manages to make even worse the position under the Treaty of Utrecht and the international position of Spain even before the UN decolonisation committee for which actually it is a good reason to call it historic.

1335 It says:

*El tratado de Gibraltar consigue empeorar el texto del tratado de Utrecht y la posición internacional de España incluso ante el comité de descolonización de la ONU por lo que efectivamente cabe calificarlo como histórico.*

1340 There is a lot actually Madam Speaker that is being said about this treaty that it is important to look at because we are looking at the detail. I hope I am giving confidence in respect of that detail but not everybody is happy with the treaty from the point of view of the European side in particular some on the Spanish side.

1345 Finally Madam Speaker, I want to deal with... it is usual that I deal with things that hon. Members say opposite and I will deal with a couple more but I do want to deal with one of the things said on my side and those are the things said by Joe Bossano.

1350 I have described him as the hawk of hawks. I think it is the only description I use of him that he might actually like but I say that Madam Speaker because I think it is important for the House to just reflect for a moment. Is there anyone more patriotic than Joe Bossano? Is there anyone who has put more on the line for Gibraltar than Joe Bossano? You have a conversation with Joe Bossano and you say to him, look Joe any of the things you did in 1995, 1996 that you change so that we might not have lost the election and he tells you no, I did the right thing even though we lost the election. Whether it is on privatisations, Gibraltar could not be what it is today without those privatisations although they lost a lot of votes and they are still played by hon. Members opposite in order to attack it but they were the right thing to do... To the international issues, I mean we take for granted now the fact that Gibraltar goes to the United Nations, but Joe Bossano went to the United Nations having to fly under the radar of the British Government who did not want him to go back! Joe Bossano continued to go to the United Nations when he was in Opposition and had to travel at the back of their Air India plane with Clive Golt. The biggest complaint I heard after that trip was that Air India do not serve whisky, right, and went through every other hardship necessary to be able to continue representing Gibraltar at the United Nations. Madam Speaker it is no small feat to be here hearing Joe Bossano say that this treaty is a good thing that it does not involve the transgression of red lines. That we must vote in favour of it and that if it did involve the transgressions of red lines hon. Members opposite have identified as potentially being cross, which I hope I have given them the comfort they do not, he would vote against it and would invite them to vote against it too.

1355 Madam Speaker I was going to deal with some of the things that the Hon. Mr Sacarello had said but all I would say to the Hon. Mr Sacarello is that actually he knows I think he is a genuinely nice guy. I genuinely do think he is a really nice guy I thought he read his speech very well. I do not think there is absolutely anything else to deal with. He was the only person who was able to elevate the issue of 3 pin plugs to the same standard of concern as boots on the ground except of course 3 pin plugs are common in the European Union. 3 pin plugs are the standard in Ireland in Cyprus, in Malta 10% of the common market uses 3 pin plugs there should be no concerns Madam Speaker for the fabled 3 pin plug.

1375 I did not understand when Mrs Ladislaus told us that democracy requires that all options should have been put 5 years ago... I did not understand what she meant. Is she saying that we should have conducted the negotiation almost in public so that everybody knew for each of the 5

1380 years where we were in the negotiation so that we could have acquiesced around agreeing each  
of those points I do not know if the hon. Lady has ever tried to draft a letter by committee but  
perhaps I should try and experiment once with hon. Members opposite and that we should all  
together write to the CPA to tell them the good work that our clerk, Mr Borge does. We should sit  
here around the table and we should say right, blank piece of paper what should we tell them? I  
bet you by the time we get to the last paragraph, hon. Members will say to me look you draft the  
letter and just circulate it for approval because drafting by committee is impossible. Let alone  
1385 publishing for 38,000 people to see the progress on every clause, everything that is proposed... If  
they do not know what the opening position of the European Union is, I can point them to it. Other  
Members on that side of the House do, it is the negotiating guidelines. That is what the European  
Union wanted Madam Speaker. And the reason we will not publish the risk assessment, I hope is  
now obvious, the reason why we will not publish the heat maps, which is an interesting segue into  
1390 Mr Bossino from Mrs Ladislaus because they made the same point is because I already described  
what the consequences of this would be Madam Speaker. If we publish the heat maps, what we  
are doing is giving the information to our worst enemies not even to our negotiating counterparts.  
You are giving it to *Vox*, in case *Vox* ever form Government. You are giving it to *Partido Popular*,  
you are giving it to Margallo, you are telling them look, this is what happens and that is not wise  
1395 Madam Speaker! It is not in the interest of our nation. That is why we did not publish it, that is  
why we will not publish them, even in the future.

Madam Speaker I confess and I do not like this, but the Hon. Mr Bossino surprised me. I like  
my foes to be predictable, I commend him for not having been predictable today. It is the first  
time since 2011 that he has not been predictable Madam Speaker. He incarnated in this place  
1400 today a maturity in his approach to this debate that should have propelled him to be the Leader  
of the Opposition responding to me in this motion. As opposed to the approach that we saw, his  
was certainly the commendable one. It was the first demonstration of leadership that I have seen  
in him in all of the years I have known him. If he does that more often Madam Speaker, he might  
find that the failure to actually get up the greasy pole starts to change. If he does not believe me  
1405 Madam Speaker, he might simply take this bit of advice... If everything else has not worked give  
the alternative a go. As Sherlock Holmes used to say:

Watson once you have completely ruled out all possible solutions, the impossible however improbable, might  
actually be the answer.

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Madam Speaker, the reason that we have not been able to negotiate a deal on the E111, for  
health care is because the European Union did not want to have it. I cannot remember whether  
the point was from Mr Ladislaus or from Mr Bossino. We were surprised the European Union did  
not want to have it but we did not press the point too much and I want hon. Members and the  
1415 whole community to understand why because look in the end if we have a reciprocal health care  
agreement with the European Union, what are we saying?

We are saying the 38,000 people of Gibraltar are saying, okay we will give the 480 million  
people of the European Union free health care if they have a problem in Gibraltar. So long as the  
480 million people of the European Union give free health care to the 38,000 people of Gibraltar  
1420 should they have an accident there. It works in the context of membership of the European Union.  
The European Union did not want to have it. We are not going to look at the possibility of a  
bilateral health care agreement between Gibraltar and Spain that is something which is now a  
post-treaty thing to do it is on our list of things to do which Spain have told us they are interested  
in doing with us.

1425 Madam Speaker the Hon. Mr Bossino is wrong to think that because a deal is made public in  
June, everything is therefore ready and can be published and we should have told businesses. In  
fact there would have been no reason to delay until December if everything had been ready in  
June. In fact a lot of the detail that businesses want for the reasons I have told was not even ready  
in December because it has been ready last week when the Attorney General has gone in February

1430 and they should not for one moment think that we have held back anything from the public or indeed from businesses that we did not already have the opportunity of setting out.

Madam Speaker when we announced the New Year's Eve Framework Agreement, the Hon. Mr Bossino gave an interview outside the Rock Hotel. A hotel which is close to his heart, he used to live there for many years, his father worked there I remember that very fondly. My father used to work there, my father was *botones* in the Rock Hotel many years ago, his father rose high, his father was the General Manager and I will always remember that interview.

1435 It was in the evening of New Year's Eve on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2020 I saw it in the evening. I had not yet had a glass of champagne, I was very tired because I would be negotiating until four in the morning. I do not think the Deputy Chief Minister has ever stayed up that late (*laughter*) and I was heartened to see Mr Bossino with his spouse saying this is very good and we want to see it become a treaty. Today he has come here to say almost the same thing for almost the same very good reasons that he set out in that interview. He is wrong Madam Speaker to think that the new State Aid provisions will be like the old State Aid provisions because the key thing that I have said about that is that actually we will be handling the State Aid regulation. The State Aid body for Gibraltar will be a Gibraltar body so whilst the rest of Europe is governed by the State Aid rules of Europe and managed by the Commission, we will be managing those regulations for ourselves with an independent Gibraltar State Aid committee. And before something is State Aid it cannot just be State Aid, it also has to affect trade between Member States there is a double hurdle there. On reclamations there is no change to what Gibraltar can do exactly the same as we have been doing until now, just looking at transboundary effect which are the rules that bound us when we were in the European Union and even when we are not in the European Union we are still bound by those rules, not just by domestic legislation but because there is an international convention on reclamation called the ESPO convention which we are a party to through the United Kingdom and that also requires us to have an eye to transboundary effect so nothing has changed there, we will continue to be as careful in the way that we carry out reclamations as we were in the past. I could not agree with him more that our identity is not defined by the Frontier Madam Speaker. There is nothing about the Frontier that defines who the Gibraltarian is. It might make us feel or not feel safer and for all the reasons I have given already, nobody should be concerned about the removal of the Frontier but the Frontier going is not going to change who we are. He was right to say if our identity is defined by the Frontier then we have a very big problem. He might want to share that view with the members of the GSD executive who have said publicly and internationally the opposite during the course of the past week I will pass him the article so that he is aware.

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1465 Madam Speaker I want to refer the House to an article that has just appeared in the Times. The Times issued an article today on what the changes will mean for those who want to come and live to Gibraltar it is an optimistic article about how good the new arrangements will be.

We are on the cusp of something exciting

1470 Says Mike Nichols founder and director of the estate agency Chesterton's Gibraltar.

In terms of growing the economy this will make Gibraltar an even more attractive and desirable place to be. The treaty has to be ratified but we are not expecting that even if it is not formally signed off by April 10, the date when the EES becomes fully operational, that border authorities will assume the new rules.

That really encapsulates where we are does not it?

1475 It plays to the voice of hope that the Hon. Mr Clinton referred to when he was talking about the cake. I think Madam Speaker that we need to resist the idea that Roosevelt warned about 60 years ago about there being people in the United States who would clip the wings of the American eagle in order to feather their own nests. We have to work on the old premise that politics stops at the water's edge. When it comes to international issues we are all together. That is a good old adage and it is the adage that we should take forward from this afternoon. So I want to end

1480 Madam Speaker, I want to end on the conciliatory note, I want to hope that I have given hon. Members the confidence that they needed to put aside their concerns about red lines transgressed, boots on the ground and weapons in Gibraltar I want to hope Madam Speaker that we will be able to vote together on this seminal motion as we stare our history in the face and tell it that we are actually better we are actually ready for a better future for our children. I want to take the approach that Mr. Bruzon referred to the House and invite the Hon. Mr Clinton to remember the cake in his speech. To offer it to Mr. Reyes who I wish a very, very happy birthday to today on behalf of all Members of the House. To offer it to our Jewish community who are celebrating Purim and to look forward to the future with confidence. It is not that Frontier who made us who we are. We have what it takes to make a success of this treaty and we have what it takes to turn around those who have never given us the benefit of the doubt before. Nothing changes on Spain's claim. We must not think or trust that Spain may change.

1485 However, we must be ready to do things in a different way and we must be ready to steel ourselves to grasp the nettle that this treaty presents and look forward to what we can do with the opportunities that it presents. Negotiating this treaty has been hard. It has been long. I have got a list longer than an Oscar winners of people that the Deputy Chief Minister and I have to thank in the Government of Gibraltar and outside of the Government in Gibraltar. In the United Kingdom, in Whitehall in particular. I do not want to recite those names today because I do not want to leave anyone out.

1495 The time will come when we will have an opportunity of saying all of those thank yous. However, I still remember sitting across the table from Ed Davis in the convent when the result came in. He looked at me and he said what are you going to do now Fabian?

1500 I had not seen him so worried until somebody in particular had been appointed to a particular post which I do not want to go into now. However, I have to say that the three thank yous I do want to say beyond the team that everybody knows I thanked in particular are to Ed Davis, to David Steele and to Ben Bathurst because as Governors of Gibraltar they have really, really, really battered for Gibraltar at every moment in the course of these negotiations. All three would in the 1970s have been described as having turned native although it is all much more sophisticated now of course.

1505 I will thank many more in the future. I do hope that after the clerk has called our names I should also have an opportunity of thanking all hon. Members for unanimously supporting this motion. I commend the motion to the House.

**Madam Speaker:** I now put the question in terms of the motion as amended proposed by the Hon. Chief Minister. We will have a division please.

*A division was called for and voting resulted as follows:*

FOR	AGAINST	ABSENT
Hon. G Arias Vasquez		None
Hon. Dr K Azopardi		
Hon. Sir J J Bossano		
Hon. D J Bossino		
Hon. L M Bruzon		
Hon. R M Clinton		
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes		
Hon. N Feetham		
Hon. Dr J J Garcia		
Hon. J Ladislaus		
Hon. P A Orfila		
Hon. G Origo		
Hon. F R Picardo		
Hon. E J Reyes		
Hon. C A Sacarello		
Hon. A Sanchez		

Hon. C P Santos

1515

**Madam Speaker:** The House has been unanimous. The motion as amended is carried.

### Adjournment

1520

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Well Madam Speaker, I move that the House should now adjourn to Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> of March at 3 p.m. and as I do so Madam Speaker, can I congratulate all hon. Members for this debate and for this result. The future is calling.

1525

**Madam Speaker:** Before I propose the adjournment I would just like to say that no doubt yesterday and today the international eyes have been upon us and I would like to commend all hon. Members for the professional and respectful manner that they have engaged in this debate which is clearly very important to all of us here in Gibraltar. You should all be proud as I am without wishing to sound patronising but I think a good job has been done in the manner of the debate so thank you for that.

1530

I now propose the question which is that this House should now adjourn to Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. and I put the question which is that this House should now adjourn to Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> of March at 3 p.m. Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye.) Those against? Passed.

This House will now adjourn to Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.

1535

*The House adjourned at 7.15 p.m.*