



PRESS RELEASE

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Gibraltar Express Condolences on Child's Death and Pledges Desire for Closer Law Enforcement Co-operation

The Chief Minister of Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, yesterday evening spoke to the Mayor of Algeciras, Jose Ignacio Landaluce, to express to him the most sincere condolences of Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar and the People of Gibraltar on the sad and untimely death of an 8 year old child at sea in an incident involving a collision between two vessels. The incident occurred at approximately 5pm off the popular "Getares" beach.

Mr Picardo said: "This sad incident has moved everyone in Gibraltar and no doubt the whole of the Campo de Gibraltar. There is widespread disbelief that recent events, including an unprovoked attack on off-duty law enforcement agents, has culminated in such a tragedy. Growing disregard for the rule of law and general lawlessness in the Campo de Gibraltar concerns us all. I therefore expressed directly to Snr Landaluce last night my most sincere condolences – because beyond our many and deep political differences, at a human level we must never lose our empathy for each other and our concern for the serious social problems affecting our neighbouring cities. Given the developing circumstances, I fully support the reinforcement of the law enforcement agencies in the Campo which all the municipal authorities in the area have called for. Additionally, I warmly welcome the decision which has reportedly already been taken by the Spanish Government to ban high powered rigid inflatable boats, as Gibraltar did some twenty three years ago. I respectfully urge the Government of Spain to implement as soon as possible the decision it has already taken to ban these vessels, in the interest of citizens of the whole region. For the Government of Gibraltar, I firmly reinstate our genuine desire to reach understandings that would enable the law enforcement agencies of Gibraltar and Spain to work even more closely together than they already do today. We owe it to the law-abiding citizens on both sides of the frontier to formalise the already close co-operation which exists in order to make it harder for criminal gangs operating in the Campo to ply their pernicious and illegal trade. We owe it to the men and women of our law enforcement agencies. And, as we prepare to leave the European Union, it would be tragic to see that the established European mechanisms for co-operation between law enforcement agencies might be diluted. We must all work together to avoid that such a political failure today might end up fuelling the criminals' future successes".