

Opposition Press Release 98 / 2009 - TIEA WITH GERMANY : STILL NO WORD FROM THE GOVERNMENT

The Opposition notes the reports in the international financial news agencies to the effect that Gibraltar has signed a Tax Information Exchange Agreement.

As was the case when a similar agreement was entered into with the Republic of Ireland, the Gibraltar Government has - as yet - made no announcement about the agreement. Reports on the reputable "Bloomberg" news agency refer to the agreement having been confirmed by the German Ministry of Finance.

In many reports the agreement is presented as Gibraltar "bending" to the new international initiatives on transparency.

Shadow Minister for Financial Services, Fabian Picardo MP, said: "It is important that the Government should announce these agreements in Gibraltar and that the texts of these agreements should be accessible to the professionals in the financial services sector who are advising on international transactions. It is not satisfactory that whilst the German and Irish Governments make these announcements, the GSD Government leaves our financial services sector to find out the existence of such agreements from reports in the international press of what other governments have said."

"It is equally disappointing to see that Gibraltar is being presented as a recalcitrant party executing agreements under pressure as a result of the present Chief Minister's failure to enter into 12 Tax Information Exchange Agreements before the G20 meeting in London in April. Guernsey, for example, is using the fact that its government had the foresight to enter into such agreements before the G20 meeting - and is therefore on the OECD whitelist - as a marketing tool. We are deprived of that positive marketing aspect by the Government's failure to enter into the requisite 12 agreements before April."

Mr Picardo added: "It is also being reported that Spain is to enter into an agreement with the United Kingdom in respect of Tax Information Exchange relating to Gibraltar. Given that Gibraltar is a separate jurisdiction to the UK for, inter alia, tax purposes and we are entering into such agreements directly with other governments, the Opposition is monitoring closely the information which becomes available in the press on the negotiations with Spain on this issue."

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