

InfoGibraltar

Declarations of the Chief Minister of Gibraltar regarding Catalonia and Scotland

Gibraltar, 12 July 2014

Due to certain misinterpretations of Fabian Picardo's words regarding Catalonia (and Scotland) during in his interview on the Espejo Público programme of Antena 3 TV on 9 July, HM Government of Gibraltar's Information Service in Spain would like to clarify the Chief Minister's exact words.

Picardo did not at any moment express opinions on the self-determination process in Catalonia, making it clear that it had always been and still was traditional policy of Gibraltar Governments not to interfere in Spanish internal affairs. He explained that he only held views on the self-determination of non-self-governing territories (as defined by UN criteria). When asked about the self-determination process in Scotland, he answered that he supported the decision of the British Prime Minister to allow the Scots to have their say by initiating the referendum process for Scotland. He declined, however, to say which way he would vote in the poll, explaining that the question was irrelevant as he was not a Scotsman.

We append a (translation of the) transcription of the interview and a link to the relevant video cut: <https://db.tt/XqPJp6Z8>

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Cristina de la Hoz (journalist)

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But I did want to ask you about sovereignty because you have at least shown certain sympathy for the independence process started in Catalonia. In fact, one of the few parliamentary groups you are meeting is ERC [Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya], with whom you have fairly fluid relations.

I don't know whether this can be carried over to your country, the United Kingdom, in reference to Scotland, if you are a supporter of independence for Scotland and if the fact that you are preparing a referendum law foretells that at some moment Gibraltar aims to follow in Scotland's or Catalonia's footsteps.

Fabian Picardo

Three points: let's start with the first. I don't interfere in Spanish politics and have never expressed a point of view about the Catalan process. But I do meet....

Cristina de la Hoz

But let me ask you, nonetheless

Fabian Picardo

I meet with all the political parties in Spain who are willing to receive me in order to explain Gibraltar's circumstances to them and not in order to qualify their position in Spanish politics, which is a Spanish matter of no interest to me. The right to self-determination, on which I and all Gibraltarians consider ourselves expert, refers to peoples from a non-self-governing territory and is totally different to the situation we are seeing in Scotland or Catalonia, although I will not express an opinion on these.

In relation to the UK, as a British citizen I have a point of view but I do not have a vote, as only the Scots will vote. I keep my point of view to myself, just as I do regarding Catalonia, I express absolutely no point of view at all but I defend...

Cristina de la Hoz

But following your logic, in the case of Scotland we're not talking about a foreign country

Fabian Picardo

...but I defend the position of the Prime Minister of the UK, Mr Cameron, who has given Scotland the right to decide, as I think do all democrats, all members of the UK House of Commons and all British politicians – we all defend the position of the UK Prime Minister.

Now, to the next point: we are preparing a referendum law. Why? Because we don't have a referendum law. This law has nothing to do with whether it's an international referendum or not, it's simply a law where we can ask Gibraltar about whatever subject and create the framework for doing so, even if it's to ask whether we should use Colgate or Oral-B. It's the legal framework in order to ask a question, which does not determine whether the question has international relevance or not. But if the moment came to have a referendum with an international projection, as we had had twice, in 1967 and 2002, then we can use this framework which we are creating.

Cristina de la Hoz

If you were Scottish, how would you vote?

Fabian Picardo

If I were a Scotsman, I would have a point of view and express it on the ballot paper in September.

Cristina de la Hoz

So, you're not going to say, are you?

Fabian Picardo

No, because it's not relevant for me

Note to editors:

This is a press release published by HM Government of Gibraltar's Information Service in Spain

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