



**PRESS RELEASE 6    Friday 27 January 2017**

## ‘We welcome you with open arms’ – says Chief Minister of Gibraltar



*CAPTION: Chief Minister of Gibraltar Fabian Picardo is welcomed by tournament organiser, Brian Callaghan.*

“We welcome you all with open arms,” Chief Minister of Gibraltar Fabian Picardo said today to the 254 competitors at the start of Round 4 in the Gibraltar Masters at the Tradewise Gibraltar Chess Festival. Mr Picardo gave thanks to all competitors for being in Gibraltar again and making the festival such an important date in everyone’s chess calendar for the year.

Gibraltar, he said, “was not the biggest place on the planet, we have not got the biggest arsenal of weapons, we are not the richest nation on the planet, but we hope you regard us as the friendliest nation on the planet.”

The festival, stated Mr Picardo proudly, was now recognised as a great international chess festival.

“It is the best open chess festival in the world and that is down to the organisers and you, to your participation and your desire to come back to Gibraltar every year,” he said.



*CAPTION: Chief Minister of Gibraltar Fabian Picardo meets top seed in this year's festival, World No.2, Fabiano Caruana. Also in the picture are Stuart Conquest and Brian Callaghan.*

## LIVE STREAMING



*The Chief Minister of Gibraltar Fabian Picardo being interviewed by International Master Jovanka Houska streamed live on the Festival website today.*

Interviewed live on the Tradewise Gibraltar Chess Festival website by International Master Jovanka Houska the Chief Minister said Gibraltar continued to be inspired by the number of people who participated in the tournament year on year.

Gibraltarians were proud of this festival, stated the Chief Minister.

“The work that has been done in the past 15 years to create this festival and to give it the name that it has around the world is something that is a huge pride to all the people of Gibraltar and the Government,” he said.

He emphasised that since being elected to Government both he and his Ministers had supported the festival.

The Chief Minister of Gibraltar spoke of tournament organiser Brian Callaghan “of giving an important part of his life” to creating awareness of chess in Gibraltar and to the creation of this festival overall.

“But it was not just about what the festival had done for Gibraltar but also what the festival had done for the world of chess itself,” he said.

Commenting on the 10 local schoolchildren who will be competing in the second week of the Amateurs tournament as from tomorrow, he said he was very proud of this fact and was confident Gibraltar would continue to reap the benefits in the future.

He revealed that he occasionally, when time allowed, played chess against his wife Justine (and often gets “a beating”). His two boys are being introduced to the game from an early age.



*CAPTION: Sponsor Pepe Canilla from PKF Canillas, organiser Brian Callaghan, sponsor Denis Lafferty from Saccone and Speed, Chief Minister Fabian Picardo, main sponsor from Tradewise James Humphreys and tournament director Stuart Conquest.*

ENDS -

Alice Mascarenhas, John Saunders and Leontxo Garcia, and Sophie Triay - Tradewise Press Chess Officers and Photographers. Steve Connor, Webmaster.

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You can find video interviews and other source material from the days round available to embed from our YouTube Channel.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa1RTZ95\\_wMc5dbzl8ugTEQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa1RTZ95_wMc5dbzl8ugTEQ)



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