

**PERSONAL STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY SENATOR F.E.COHEN
ON TUESDAY 5th JULY 2011**

As Members will know, at the end of last year, the Chief Minister asked me to assist him and the Deputy Chief Minister in developing the Island's external relations. Consequently, I was appointed as Assistant Chief Minister with responsibility for External Relations.

The objective is to build our relationships with other jurisdictions and to further Jersey's international standing and this appointment was in response to the Ministry of Justice's request that Jersey represents itself in discussions with UK ministerial departments and with overseas jurisdictions. The former Chief Minister, Senator Walker, had already done excellent work in this area and the current Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister had continued this work, but it was clear that a dedicated post needed to be established.

The objectives set out by the Chief Minister are being achieved through direct discussion and are bearing considerable fruit in a wide range of areas. Specifically, we have obtained ministerial support in relation to the future of our 0/10 tax regime through agreeing to remove deemed distribution. Visits to China, India and Israel have delivered considerable success in relation to jurisdictional reputation, culture, education, tourism and business. We even made representations to ensure that the Jersey BBC news service budget was retained.

However, whilst we are achieving significant results, the task of assisting the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister requires dedicated commitment and full time application.

To give but one example, over the last two weeks, as a result of the extended Island Plan debate, I have been forced to cancel meetings with over twenty leading parliamentarians and officials at Westminster and in Brussels. Consequently, last Friday, I signed 17 letters of apology as I had been forced to reschedule these meetings. These included letters to the U.K. Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister.

I am acutely aware that my obligation is to serve the Island in the best manner possible and, as this external relations work has grown, it is clear that, if I am to carry out my role in this area in the best interests of the Island, I can no longer continue as Minister for Planning and Environment. I have therefore given notice to the Chief Minister of my resignation as Minister for Planning and Environment.

There is much important and urgent work needing to be undertaken in the field of external relations. The Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister have asked that I assist in ensuring that the Tax Information Exchange Agreement with India is signed in short order. They also wish that I continued to work with them on securing our tax regime agreement, whilst also monitoring the emerging territorial tax issues relating to Gibraltar and elsewhere. There is also immediate work needed to assist Ministerial colleagues in the Health, Education and Economic Development Departments. In addition, promoting the Island's reputation internationally at a cultural level is of increasing importance and I am currently engaged in an important project to facilitate this.

It is with great regret that I leave the team at Planning and Environment. I believe that, together, over the last six years, we have delivered substantial improvements to the way the island's built environment is managed. Over recent weeks States Members participated in successfully delivering the Island Plan and the North of Town Masterplan, setting out a vision for the Island and delivering enduring sustainability whilst providing 900 affordable homes. Architecture has

improved beyond recognition with the introduction and assistance of the Jersey Architecture Commission and we are now seeing the emergence of great works of art on all large projects through the Percentage for Art programme. The ECO-ACTIVE environmental campaign has delivered huge benefits in the promotion of environmental awareness and the energy insulation grant scheme, thanks to the foresight and support of States Members, has delivered practical environmental help to 1,000 Island families.

It is with a heavy heart that I have made this decision but I believe it is a necessary one if I am to serve Jersey effectively in an international relations role.

I wish to thank the Chief Minister, Ministers and every States Member for their support in my role as Planning and Environment Minister over the last six years. Special thanks go to my long standing Assistant Minister Deputy Duhamel and his predecessor the Deputy of Trinity, together with the Deputy of St Peter. I particularly extend my gratitude to the members of the Planning Applications Panel led with great competence by the Constable of Trinity.

I am indebted to my Chief Officer and the exceptionally competent team at Planning and Environment. The delivery of the States' objectives would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of the whole Planning and Environment team.

I wish to record my very special thanks to two people who have assisted me enormously at Planning and Environment over the last six years. They are the Director of Development Control and my Personal Assistant.

Finally and most sincerely I would like to thank my wife for her support. As Members will know I have been in the firing line for all planning decisions and recently this has brought its problems all of which she has borne with grace and fortitude.