

Forum of Dialogue on Gibraltar

Meeting in Gibraltar

On 26th March 2007

Communiqué

The participants are pleased to have resumed their meetings following the Ministerial Round in Cordoba on 18th September 2006 at which agreements were reached in relation to Gibraltar Airport, Pensions, fluidity, at the fence/frontier telephone issues and the establishment in Gibraltar of the Instituto Cervantes.

The participants have today reviewed the implementation of the agreements reached in Cordoba, and have expressed satisfaction at the high degree of progress to date. The Pensions Settlement has been accepted by 99% of the affected Spanish pensioners. The United Kingdom will make the first payment next month. The agreement relating to telecommunications issues has been implemented. In respect of fluidity at the fence/frontier the participants are especially pleased to see the considerable improvement that has occurred and wish to express their appreciation to officials on both sides.

In relation to the Airport statement, direct flights between Gibraltar Airport and Madrid-Barajas have been established since 16 December, and will be enhanced by further services as from May this year. The interim arrangements have been implemented as envisaged.

Implementation preparatory work continues in relation to airspace security and flight path issues, and the Gibraltar Government remains on schedule with work to build a New Air Terminal at Gibraltar Airport in accordance with the terms of the Airport Statement agreed in Cordoba.

Finally, the Gibraltar Government and the Instituto Cervantes are actively engaged in the early establishment of an Instituto Cervantes in Gibraltar with the aim of this opening before the end of the year.

The participants have today also identified the next set of issues for the future work of the Forum. This work will include co-operation on environment issues, financial services and tax, judicial and law enforcement co-operation, education, maritime communications and Schengen Visa issues. The Forum will also deal with specific issues as they arise in the hope of resolving them as expeditiously and amicably as possible

The Forum also welcomes the decision of the “Comision Mixta de Co-operacion y Colaboracion entre Gibraltar y la Mancomunidad de Municipios la Comarca del Campo de Gibraltar”, which the Junta de Andalucia has recently joined, to focus on co-operation in issues such as health, education and emergency planning co-ordination. .

The participants have reaffirmed their commitment to the Forum and have agreed to meet again to advance work on these issues in the near future. The date and venue will be announced in due course.