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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Continuing maritime incursions by Spanish state agencies are intolerable**

The Government considers that the continuing incursions by vessels of the Spanish navy and other agencies of the Spanish state into the territorial waters of Gibraltar are totally unacceptable. This follows incursions by both the Spanish navy and the Spanish SVA today.

The incursions follow a general pattern which has been established over the last few years where the Spanish agencies pretend to behave as if British Gibraltar Territorial Waters (BGTW) did not exist and as if the waters around Gibraltar belong to Spain

These incursions constitute a frontal challenge and an affront to British sovereignty and are intolerable.

The Government of Gibraltar has invested in the maritime assets which are available to Gibraltar. Earlier this year, two large interceptors were made available to the Royal Gibraltar Police. The arrival of larger maritime assets are imminent. The Government is grateful to the marine section of the RGP for the work that they do on a daily basis in order to ensure that the law of Gibraltar is upheld at sea.

However, the defence of Gibraltar and of the integrity of our territorial waters against the armed forces of another country is not the constitutional responsibility of the Gibraltar Government, nor the designated responsibility of the Royal Gibraltar Police. This is the responsibility of the United Kingdom which is why the Royal Navy challenge the intruders.

The Gibraltar Government welcomes the robust approach with Spain that the United Kingdom has adopted on a number of fronts and the unequivocal support which has been forthcoming on a number of issues. However, it is clear that the continuing breach of international law has now gone beyond the issue of diplomatic notes.

The Spanish Government, for its part, needs to ask what this aggressive posturing achieves apart from a waste of fuel on her vessels at a time of severe economic crisis.