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30 years since opening of the border with Spain

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar reminds the people of Gibraltar, especially the younger generations that 30 years ago today the frontier between Gibraltar and Spain was opened for the first time after 13 years of total blockade. Quite apart from the actual physical closure of the border, the Spanish Government, led by General Franco, had also removed telephone communications between both territories, thus totally separating families and friends on either side of the border.

The decision to isolate Gibraltar was part of Spain's stated strategy to sink the Rock's economy, based primarily on MOD spending through HM Dockyard and the Military Base. The full workforce of Spanish citizens in Gibraltar was withdrawn with the consequent tragic human suffering inflicted and the majority were forced to emigrate.

HMGOG recalls the unilateral decision to reopen the border and re-establish communications was taken by the Socialist (PSOE) Government led by Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and Foreign Minister Fernando Moran, who described the measure as a 'humanitarian' one.

HMGOG salutes the resolve and spiritual strength of past generations of Gibraltarians, both the politicians who served Gibraltar in those difficult years and the ordinary Gibraltarian men, women and children, who suffered the blockade and united as a people to resist the concerted efforts of the Spanish Government to take the sovereignty of Gibraltar. Many of these are alive today and can take comfort of their contribution to our political, cultural and social evolution.

HMGOG would also like to express its solidarity with the people of La Linea and the hinterland, who suffered the grave consequences of their Government's inhuman action. Thankfully, all modern attempts to undermine Gibraltar are nowadays less radical or dramatic, although the Gibraltarians are recently experiencing new attempts, some blatant and others covert, to sabotage our economy and our right to existence as a people for the same purpose.