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<b>PRESS RELEASE</b>
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**GOVERNMENT PRAISES MARITIME AGENCIES**

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar wishes to acknowledge the excellent work of the Royal Gibraltar Police in dealing professionally and calmly with the demonstration held by Spanish fishermen from the Cofradias in La Linea and Algeciras.

HMGOG is also grateful for the work done in support of the RGP by HM Customs, officers of the Gibraltar Defence Police and the Port Authority, as well as that done by members of the Royal Navy.

The RGP has communicated to HMGOG that the Guardia Civil presence was, throughout the event, very much in co-ordination with them in order to ensure that the protest passed without incident.

The fishermen's protest was obviously difficult to police and had attracted international media attention. The RGP and all those who were called to support them discharged their obligations to the highest standards and have, as ever, done Gibraltar proud.

HMGOG notes that the protest demonstrated the concerns of the Spanish fishermen of the La Linea and Algeciras 'Cofradias.' These Spanish fishermen are welcome to continue to fish in British Gibraltar Territorial Waters as long as they do so in keeping with Gibraltar law. The British Gibraltar Territorial Waters (as defined under the United Nations Law of the Sea (1982, The Montego Bay Convention/'UNCLOS') are recognised by all signatories except the Kingdom of Spain.

HMGOG has spent time and money on the recently-published, Fishing Report, whose authors included Spanish marine experts. The Report recommended 'active management' of the marine environment to produce a sustainable fishing plan and the decision to create an artificial reef in BGTW was welcomed by Greenpeace and by Spanish environmental groups.

The Report has already resulted in legislative changes to Gibraltar's Nature Protection Act and further changes will soon be published.

Ends

#### Notes to Editors:

The area where the artificial reef was created was frequented by only one vessel, the 'Divina Providencia.' The rest of the Spanish fishermen have tended to fish in different areas of BGTW when they have fished here. The 'Divina Providencia' was fishing, and the reef was created, in an area that even the Junta de Andalucia did not recognise as a fishing ground.