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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Garcia accuses Spain of “deliberate and politically motivated delays” in journal article**

The dispute with Gibraltar generated by the Spanish Government has made the front page of “INTERLIB” which is the journal of the Liberal International British Group. The cover depicts a photograph of the historical re-enactment society with the headline “Falling in Behind the People of Gibraltar”.

This edition includes several contributions on international affairs, among them an article from the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia entitled “Spain has turned its back on Gibraltar dialogue”.

Dr Garcia has traced the present political situation to the decision taken by the Partido Popular Government in Madrid, as soon as they were elected, to abandon the Trilateral Forum for Dialogue. “This effectively left the United Kingdom and Gibraltar at the discussion table and Spain outside the door of the room,” he explains in the article.

“On a separate note, this position of the present Spanish Government raises all sorts of questions as to how any future Spanish Government can be trusted to honour anything that they sign about Gibraltar after the high-level political agreement that had been signed in 2004 by their Socialist predecessors has been dumped with no qualms,” says the article. It goes on to add that Madrid has also threatened to dismantle everything that was agreed in 2006 at Cordoba. The article also refers to the offer made in April 2012 by Foreign Secretary William Hague of “ad hoc” meetings which Madrid did not take up at the time but which have now been mooted once again.

Dr Garcia then goes on to criticise the “deliberate and politically motivated” delays at the frontier created by the Spanish authorities. He says that these are a carbon copy of those imposed by General Franco in the 1960s and adds that Franco failed and his successors will fail too. “But Franco’s Spain could flout the laws of common decency and behaviour at its border with Gibraltar almost with impunity. The present Spanish Government is

constrained by the laws of the European Union and by the views of many of its own citizens, including politicians, who do not agree with what is happening”, says Dr Garcia.

The Deputy Chief Minister concludes that the right to freedom of movement is not the only principle at stake in the dispute that Spain has chosen the generate over Gibraltar. “At base, this is about a small people in a small country who are being openly bullied by their large neighbour next door in order to browbeat them into submission. We should stand up to bullies because this is part of what being a Liberal and what being a Democrat means,” he tells INTERLIB.

Ends