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Spanish Government is distorting annual UN Consensus Decision

The Government notes that the text of the annual Consensus Decision between the United Kingdom and Spain is being distorted by the Spanish Government and sectors of the Spanish media.

The text of the Consensus has been public in Gibraltar for about two weeks. It is not clear why this is being presented in Spain as something which materialised yesterday or as kind of diplomatic victory, when nothing could be further from the truth.

This Consensus is nothing new and has been agreed between the United Kingdom and Spain year after year, with practically the same wording. This has always included a reference to the Brussels Process and no reference to the address by the Chief Minister or to what the “aspirations” of Gibraltar actually are.

The wording this year makes reference to listening “to the interests and aspirations of Gibraltar that are legitimate under international law”. In the context of the process of decolonisation and removal from the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories this reference in the Consensus can only mean the principle of self-determination which is already an overriding principle of international law given the Charter of the United Nations, the International Covenants and the case law of the International Court of Justice on the subject.

Moreover, it is worth recalling the commitment of the United Kingdom Government never to enter into arrangements under which the people of Gibraltar would pass under the sovereignty of another state against their freely and democratically expressed wishes. In addition to this, the UK is committed not to enter into a process of sovereignty negotiations with which Gibraltar is not content. This has been repeated time and again by the UK Government to the Government of Spain. Indeed, the Prime Minister himself made very robust statements of support for Gibraltar and for our right to choose in his video message on National Day.

It is clear that Spain is clutching at straws in trying to pretend that the annual consensus decision is somehow something new or that will restart the Brussels Process. The people of Gibraltar will not be duped; and the people of Spain will soon see that their Government's rhetoric in print and bullying at the frontier achieves nothing. As the recent

statements from the EU Commission demonstrate, the reality will always shine through, and an objective determination of issues favours Gibraltar."