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PRESS RELEASE

No: 566/2014

Date: 23rd October 2014

Government restates its position on ad hoc dialogue

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar notes the article published in today's edition of the Spanish newspaper El Pais entitled "Madrid, Londres y Gibraltar ultiman un nuevo foro de dialogo en Bruselas."

The position of the Government of Gibraltar is as listed below.

1. That it remains committed to the Trilateral Forum for Dialogue as the framework for discussions with Spain on matters of local cooperation;
2. That the position of the United Kingdom - as recently expressed in the UN Fourth Committee and elsewhere - has not changed in respect of its own continued strong commitment to the Trilateral Forum for Dialogue;
3. The article is therefore wrong to suggest any change in the position of either the Gibraltar Government or the Government of the United Kingdom on the Trilateral Forum for Dialogue;
4. That the Government of Gibraltar has long expressed its willingness to participate in ad hoc talks, on the basis agreed with Madrid that the talks are without prejudice to our position on the proper format for dialogue. Any ad hoc talks will therefore not be a substitute for the Trilateral Forum for Dialogue;
5. That the Government of Gibraltar will attend the ad hoc talks in its own right with its own head of delegation, reflecting the fact that Gibraltar has constitutional competence for everything except defence, foreign affairs and internal security;
6. That the Government of Gibraltar is prepared to share views on environmental best practice with Spain, in particular given the very clear findings in Gibraltar's favour in respect of each of the areas of complaint (bunkering, reclamation and creation of reef) which Spain put to the EU Commission and the Commission has dismissed. The delays at the border generated by the disproportionate controls exercised by the Spanish authorities would also be on the agenda.
7. It is agreed that it would make sense for any ad hoc talks to be held in Brussels.