



PRESS RELEASE

No. 553/2015

Date: 2nd August 2015

SPANISH STATE VESSEL IN CAMP BAY

A serious incursion took place yesterday evening when a Spanish state vessel attempted to assert its authority, not only inside BGTW, but within a few metres of the shoreline.

At around 1830, a Spanish customs vessel (SVA), the Aguila IV, chased a Gibraltar-registered pleasure boat within BGTW and inside the demarcated buoys at Camp Bay. The pleasure boat had been stationary about 1 nautical mile off Europa Point when it was circled by the SVA which had approached from the Bay making its way past the North Mole.

It had earlier been given the UNCLOS warning over radio and did not respond.

When approached by launches from RGP and GDP and by a Navy RHIB, the crew of the Spanish vessel claimed that, earlier, the pleasure boat had been off Estepona and had failed to stop when asked to do so.

Having been informed that it had no jurisdiction inside BGTW, the Aguila IV was then escorted into Spanish waters. The two occupants of the pleasure boat later claimed when questioned that they were fishing off Europa Point when the SVA vessel had requested their documentation. They had moved into Camp Bay and called for assistance.

'This is another glaringly obvious example of a Spanish state vessel attempting to assert its authority well inside our territorial limits. It could hardly be clearer that the vessel had no jurisdiction to operate at Europa Point and even less just a few metres from a beach at Camp Bay,' said the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia. 'Quite apart from the serious political issues raised by this matter, it is also dangerous for a state vessel to operate in this way inside a demarcated bathing area. This is illegal in the face of internationally-recognised Laws of the Sea.'