

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION 97/2006
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In an interview published on the 10th August, Jaime Mayor Oreja the former PP Minister was asked how he evaluated the tripartite forum to resolve the dispute on Gibraltar.

In reply he said that Gibraltar required a tough line on the part of Spain. This he justified on the premise that when one is negotiating with another nation, one has to operate by certain rules but without showing signs of weakness.

The Opposition considers it important that finally a leading politician in Spain has openly and finally acknowledged that in negotiating with us they are negotiating with another nation.

However, Mr Orjea, who has experienced Basque national sentiment as a candidate in that country should not underestimate the conviction and firmness of the national identity of the Gibraltarians which will not be dented in any way irrespective of the degree of firmness adopted by Spain.

Mr Oreja also expressed the view that in lowering the demands at the start of the negotiating process, it did not mean that Spain were going to achieve more at the end.

In that respect Mr Oreja is right. Spain is not going to achieve anything by pretending to be weak at the beginning in order to lull us into dropping our guard or into a false sense of security so that they can up their price at the end.

Mr Oreja considers that success on their claim to Gibraltar depends on the toughness of the Spanish position and nothing else. The reply to that analysis is that they can get as tough as they like, the answer is that they will still not get their hands on the Rock.

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