

## **STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION - 88/2007**

**6 September 2007**

NATIONAL DAY MESSAGE 2007

From the Leader of the Opposition Joe Bossano

On Monday, the 10<sup>th</sup>, Gibraltar's National Day, we celebrate our separate nationhood as a sovereign people with a right to self-determination. This enables us to make use of this fundamental human right to attain decolonisation and to decide the future international status of our city-state.

What we will not be able to do, yet, is to say that all this has already happened because the UK, as the administering power, continues to report to the United Nations on Gibraltar as it does in respect of all its other overseas territories, as if our international status was no different now, in 2007, to what it has been in the past.

Last year, on the eve of the Referendum, in October, UK once again submitted at the UN a joint statement with Spain requiring our decolonisation to be negotiated between them, in the spirit of the 1984 Brussels Declaration. So far, there is no indication that the same thing will not be repeated this coming October.

If this happens, it raises a serious question mark over what last year's Referendum achieved. It reinforces Spain's position at the UN, that the modernization of our constitution has been no different to what is taking place in other British Overseas Territories, which, under international law, all remain listed as colonies.

We made clear a year ago that for us the need for a National Day Political Rally, in the campaign to achieve international recognition of our right to self-determination, was far from over.

In the next couple of months, our parliament comes to the end of its four year life and you will have to choose a new Government. In the choice we put before you we will include a clear cut commitment on the way ahead to complete the exercise of self-determination and the fulfilment of our decolonisation.

The creation of National Day in 1992 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our rejection of the Spanish claim in the 1967 Referendum and the assertion of our separate identity as a people with the right to our land, all of it, isthmus included.

These rights are still threatened by Spain's ambitions to take us over and UK's ambiguity in discharging its obligation to defend us. Whatever may be happening, none of the fundamentals have changed.

We are here today, as we have been in the past and we will be in the future, to defend those rights and maintain that this Rock is ours and Spain will NEVER, EVER, have any say over it.

Long live Gibraltar and its people! Happy National Day!

**ENDS**