

**STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION  
65/2008**

**3 July 2008**

The Opposition note the announcement that the Government has acquired premises from a private sector landlord which it will hand over to the Spanish Government for the setting up of an Instituto Cervantes.

It is understood that the premises in question are a full floor of Cloister Building in Market Lane above the offices of Bland Ltd.

The view of the Opposition on the Instituto is well known. We have no objection to Spain setting up such a centre if they want to, what we object to is any form of subsidy on the part of the taxpayers of Gibraltar through the allocation of premises. The same would apply if this was for a Consulate instead of an Institute or indeed if it were for any other Government than that of Spain.

The Opposition considers that the Instituto is already well endowed with funds from the Spanish state to pay their own way. The Director of the Institute is already quoted as saying in the Spanish press that she estimates the cost of refurbishing the premises will be in the region of 250,000 euros, which it is logical to assume that they will pay.

The details of the property transaction have not been made public. It is not clear whether or for how long these premises were on the market, or how the deal came to be concluded. The Opposition will therefore monitor the situation and question the Government at the next available opportunity in order to be able to react fully when we are in full possession of all the facts.

**ENDS**