

## STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION

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The Government have been promoting and advertising a website aimed specifically at persons who may be interested in investing in Gibraltar when the website does not exist. This can only give a very poor impression particularly to foreign investors from outside Gibraltar who may be interested in setting up here.

In the 2004 budget the Government took the first steps for the setting up of what has become the InvestGibraltar office. The role of the office is described by the Government as that of a frontline organisation which acts as a bridge between the private and public sector which “provides business related advice, guidance and support to those wishing to start up, expand or diversify an enterprise in Gibraltar.”

The website of the office is given as [www.investgibraltar.gov.gi](http://www.investgibraltar.gov.gi) in the website of the Gibraltar Government, the website of the Gibraltar office in London and in advertisements that have been placed by the Government in publications which obviously aim to give publicity to its existence and its function. Potential investors who may want to establish a business locally and who may want to download a “Business Support Pack” or a copy of a booklet entitled “Setting up a Business in Gibraltar” are asked to go to the above website and obtain it from there.

However, it is not possible to download copies from the given website because it does not yet exist or the website has not yet gone “live”. Anyone who clicks on [www.investgibraltar.gov.gi](http://www.investgibraltar.gov.gi) is greeted by the message: “This Domain is hosted by Gibconnect for any information please contact [hostmaster@gibconnect.com](mailto:hostmaster@gibconnect.com) Gibconnect, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, The Haven, Gibraltar...”. Contact telephones and fax numbers are also given. There is nothing to indicate that the website is being upgraded and interested persons are not referred to the department in question.

It is impossible to tell for how long the website has not been operational but the information received by the Opposition suggests that it has been out of action for a very long time. The Gibraltar Government main website says in its section on InvestGibraltar that “A dynamic business environment is of vital importance to any economy. Advances in technology, new products and services as well as changing trends and attitudes require businesses to react – quickly.” It is highly ironic that that the Government should preach about advances in technology and reacting quickly and then their own advertised website does not work.

Commenting on the matter, Shadow Minister responsible for Trade and Industry Dr Joseph Garcia said:

“The concept behind the InvestGibraltar office was not one that we disagreed with in the sense that it is good for investors, both local and international, that there should be a one stop shop. However, it is totally unacceptable that the Government should then advertise and give publicity to a website for this facility when the website does not exist. There is also the separate issue of the cost of these advertisements which needs to be looked into further at the next question-time in Parliament. This embarrassing slip should be corrected immediately.”

ENDS