

## **STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION**

24/2010

1 March 2010

The Opposition welcomes the call by the Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon for a pragmatic and realistic approach to the decolonisation of the territories remaining on the UN list taking into account the specific circumstances of each. These comments were made in an address to the organisational meeting of the UN Committee of 24.

The Secretary General also told the Committee that it was crucial for the administering powers to work with the people of the Territories under their administration in order to generate further momentum for self-determination. He called for creative solutions for the remaining colonies on the list if the United Nations was to fulfil its obligations in supporting the legitimate aspirations of the people of these territories.

This call for a case by case approach was repeated by the new Chairman of the Committee of 24 Donatus Keith St Aimee from St Lucia. He declared that there was a “crucial need” to generate new momentum so as to ensure the 16 remaining Territories would be able to exercise their right to self-determination. Gibraltar is one of the 16 territories listed as a colony.

The call by the UN Secretary General for decolonisation to take into account the specific circumstances of each territory carries with it echoes of the so-called 4<sup>th</sup> option for decolonisation which provides for a tailor-made solution for the decolonisation of a colonial territory. It will be recalled that the origins of the 2006 Constitution were based on the premise that it would lead to the decolonisation of Gibraltar in this way.

The Select Committee that drew up the draft proposals for negotiation with the United Kingdom “felt that the people of Gibraltar should achieve decolonisation by electing, as is reflected in the proposed reformed Constitution, the so-called ‘Fourth Option’, which has been identified by the United Nations as one of the acceptable ways of achieving this.”

The policy of the Opposition remains to engage the Committee of 24 in order to establish what changes, if any, need to be made to the 2006 Constitution in order to secure the removal of Gibraltar from the list. The comments made by the UN Secretary General and the new Chairman of the Committee are a step in the right direction and it is important that these words are now translated into action so that a new impetus is given to the issue.

ENDS