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**9th Progress Report on Tireless
by the Government of Gibraltar
Panel of Experts**

Following their last meeting with the Ministry of Defence on the 22nd March to review the repairs to the Nuclear Submarine HMS Tireless, the Panel has advised the Government as Follows:

(i.) The Panel is satisfied that the Swept Branch Connector weld (and the welds associated with sealing the surge line) has been completed and finished to a satisfactory standard;

(ii.) The Panel now has sufficient information to complete its pre-hydro test report which is to be finalised by the end of the 1st week of April, that is in advance of the Hydro test which is now scheduled for the 3rd week of April and;

(iii.) That because of the delays in the internal profiling of the Swept Branch Connector weld, the Panel considers the sail away date for Tireless may need to be delayed until mid-May with a corresponding delay in the departure of RSA Rosalie and clearance of the radioactive waste store.

Separately, the British Government has informed the Gibraltar Government that it has received a request from the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council to have a technician present aboard HMS Tireless during the Hydrotesting of the now repaired cooling circuit so that it is in a position to reassure Spanish public opinion about the safety of the tests. The British Government has sought the views of the Gibraltar

the views of the Gibraltar Government to this request. In accordance with its previously and publicly stated position the Gibraltar Government has informed the British Government that it would not be opposed to the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council's request being acceded to provided that it is made clear, in the context of such a visit, that Spain has no role in the Gibraltar Naval Base and that the British Government would not countenance giving Spain any such role. The basis of the visit has to be in the context of neighbourly cooperation, given that Spain is potentially affected, as a neighbour, by this issue.

This of course arises only if the Government of Gibraltar should, in due course signify that it is not opposed to the hydrotest being carried out in Gibraltar. The Gibraltar Government awaits its panel of experts advice in this respect.

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