

GIBRALTAR - UK AND SPAIN SET DEADLINE

London / Barcelona November 21, 2001



Spain and Britain have set a deadline of next June - the end of Spain's EU Presidency - for an agreement on the issue of Gibraltar, the southern tip of Spain which is still a British Crown Colony.

The majority of the 30,000 inhabitants remain fiercely opposed to Spain having any say in their affairs. But both governments hope giving

Gibraltar more self-government will win public support in a referendum, possibly in the second half of next year.

Gibraltar was captured by Britain in 1704 during the the war of Spanish succession by a combined Anglo-Dutch fleet and British sovereignty formalised in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht.

Gibraltar, measuring some 1km by 5km, became a British colony in 1830. Spain has made several unsuccessful attempts to recapture Gibraltar. The Rock has endured 15 sieges - the most famous started in 1779 and lasted more than three years.