

U.K. sending warships to Gibraltar

12th August, 2013



Britain says it will send ten warships to Gibraltar on Monday. The ships will make a stop on their way to the

Middle East. Many people think the stopover is bad timing because relations between Britain and Spain have become bad recently. Spain got angry after Gibraltar's government put concrete blocks on the seabed. It said this was to let sea life grow and to stop Spanish boats fishing nearby. Spain then said it might start charging 50 euros (about \$67) for people to travel across the border between Gibraltar and Spain. Tensions increased again when Spain started searching people entering Spain as security against terrorism. Motorists had to wait for up to six hours at the border.

Spain gave Gibraltar to Britain in 1713 under the Treaty of Utrecht. It became an important base for Britain's Royal Navy. Gibraltar is a small area of land measuring just 6.8 square kilometers, south of Cadiz. The 430-meter-tall Rock of Gibraltar stands in the center. The population is around 30,000 and most of them are very pro-British. Many parts of Gibraltar look like a piece of mainland Britain. Spain has argued for decades that Gibraltar should be returned to Spain. Britain's government said that could only happen if the people of Gibraltar vote for it. The British prime minister told his Spanish counterpart: "This issue should not damage our bilateral relations. However there was a real risk of this happening."

Sources: EuroNews / Expatica / Daily Mirror

Writing

All land that countries argue about should belong to the nearest country. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

warships / Gibraltar / bad timing / bad relations / fishing / cross the border / security / navy / small area / population / decades / returned / vote / issue / bilateral

True / False

- British warships will stay in Gibraltar to protect the people there. T / F
- Relations between Britain and Spain have never been better. T / F
- Gibraltar tried to stop Spanish fishermen fishing near its coast. T / F
- Some people had to wait for six hours to cross Gibraltar's border. T / F
- Spain gave Gibraltar to Britain 300 years ago. T / F
- The rock in the middle of Gibraltar is over 500 meters high. T / F
- The population of Gibraltar is around 300,000. T / F
- Britain's leader said relations with Spain could be damaged. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. way | a. opposite number |
| 2. recently | b. allow |
| 3. let | c. middle |
| 4. charging | d. friction |
| 5. tensions | e. chance |
| 6. base | f. route |
| 7. center | g. given back |
| 8. returned | h. asking for money |
| 9. counterpart | i. center |
| 10. risk | j. lately |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about British history?
- Should countries that have land thousands of miles away return it?
- Should Spain accept they signed a treaty to give Gibraltar away?
- If the people want to be British, why is Spain arguing?
- Do you think the people should vote?
- What other places are countries arguing or fighting over?
- What solution would make Spain and Britain happy?
- What questions would you like to ask Spain's prime minister?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. The ships will make a stop on their | a. Britain's Royal Navy |
| 2. bad | b. at the border |
| 3. become bad | c. 50 euros |
| 4. it might start charging | d. Spanish counterpart |
| 5. wait for up to six hours | e. recently |
| 6. It became an important base for | f. of this happening |
| 7. most of them are very | g. way to the Middle East |
| 8. that could only happen if the people of | h. pro-British |
| 9. The British prime minister told his | i. timing |
| 10. there was a real risk | j. Gibraltar vote for it |

Discussion – Student B

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Gibraltar'?
- What do you know about Gibraltar?
- What do you think about what you read?
- Do you think Spain is right to get angry?
- Is it OK for Spain to charge people to enter Spain from Gibraltar?
- Will the warships going to Gibraltar make relations worse?
- What do you think of Britain's navy?
- What questions would you like to ask Britain's prime minister?

Spelling

- aoletsinr between Britain and Spain
- encerotc blocks
- Spain then said it might start nghigrac
- oinstnse increased again
- teyricus against terrorism
- tirsoosmt had to wait for up to six hours
- reamisngu just 6.8 square kilometers
- The appoiolntu is around 30,000
- a piece of Indimana Britain
- Spain has argued for daedsce
- Britain's terngoevmn
- The British prime minister told his Spanish utrecnprto

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. j	3. b	4. h	5. d
6. i	7. c	8. g	9. a	10. e

Role Play

Role A – A Gibraltarian

You think Gibraltar should always be a British territory. Tell the others three reasons why. You don't think Spain should have Gibraltar. Tell the others three reasons why.

Role B – Spanish prime minister

You think Britain should return Gibraltar to Spain. Tell the others three reasons why. You are very unhappy with the British prime minister. Tell the others three reasons why.

Role C – British prime minister

Gibraltar will be British forever. Tell the others three reasons why. You are very unhappy with the Spanish prime minister. Tell the others three reasons why.

Role D – Geography professor

You think it's time for countries to redraw the world map. There are many countries that "own" land that is thousands of miles away. This is wrong. Tell the others three reasons why. You think Britain should return Gibraltar to Spain.

Speaking - Damage

Rank these. Put the things that could damage international relations at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- immigration
- land disputes
- spying
- religious tensions
- supporting wars
- nuclear weapons programs
- pollution
- terrorism

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.