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ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

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81st Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Extraordinary Meeting
Teleconference, 18 January 2016

**Letter from Mrs. Louise De Sousa, Head of the Mediterranean Department of the United Kingdom
Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to UNEP dated 22 September 2015**

**Lettre de Mme Louise De Sousa, Chef du département Méditerranéen du bureau des affaires étrangères
et du Commonwealth du Royaume-Uni (Ministère des Affaires étrangères) au PNUE datant du 22
Septembre 2015**



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Mr Gaetano Leone, Coordinator
Secretariat to the Barcelona Convention Coordinating Unit of the Mediterranean
Action Plan

By email: gaetano.leone@unepmap.gr

22 September 2015

Dear Mr Leone,

I am Head of the Mediterranean Department of the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) in London. I am writing to enquire about the application procedure for accession to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the Barcelona Convention), as well as its Protocol on the Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean, and its Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean.

The Government of the United Kingdom is considering an application for accession to the Barcelona Convention and these Protocols on behalf of Gibraltar, a Mediterranean territory for whose international relations the United Kingdom is responsible. To be clear, the United Kingdom's intention would be to apply for accession to the Convention and Protocols to become a Party solely in respect of the territory of Gibraltar. The United Kingdom remains ultimately responsible for Gibraltar's international obligations.

Article 32 of the Barcelona Convention provides for the accession of any State subject to prior approval by three fourths of the Contracting Parties. I would be very grateful if you could respond, setting out the process for seeking such approval. It would be particularly helpful to understand whether the process must take place at the biennial meeting of the Contracting Parties, or whether it can be carried out by written procedure. If the former, I would welcome more detail about the next meeting; the deadline by which the United Kingdom would need to submit an official request in order for it to be considered at this meeting, and what such a request should contain.

For the avoidance of doubt, this letter does **not** constitute an official request from the Government of the United Kingdom to accede to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

The Government of the United Kingdom has consulted the Government of Gibraltar on the contents of this letter and will remain in close contact with them.

I am very grateful for your assistance in this matter. Please do not hesitate to call me on +44 (0)20 7008 3310 if you would like to discuss. You can also reach me by email at louise.desousa@fco.gov.uk.

With best wishes,

L De Sousa

Louise De Sousa
Head, Mediterranean Department
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