



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Discrimination against our athletes is totally unacceptable**

The Government condemns the decision of the organisers of the World Master Athletics Championships in Malaga to discriminate against athletes from Gibraltar by insisting that they cannot represent their country in the competition. This is totally unacceptable and has no place in the modern Europe of today.

It will be recalled that an edict issued by Spain's Consejo Superior de Deportes many decades ago instructed Spanish sporting associations to block any application by a Gibraltar federation into its corresponding international body. This then translated into Gibraltar sportsmen and sportswomen being banned from flying their flag or wearing their colours in any international sporting events that took place in Spain. In the past this has led to no flags at all being flown in certain competitions.

The Minister for Sport Steven Linares said:

"The decision of the Spanish Government, through its Consejo General de Deportes, to prevent Gibraltar athletes from competing in a race in Malaga in our colours is a perverse vestige of a past of which modern Spain cannot be proud. These are vetoes against our people which hark back to the time of the Spanish dictatorship, and they belong in that time. We cannot build a strong relationship with our neighbours in this way. We must see nonsense of this sort relegated to history, where it belongs. Gibraltar sportspeople can rely on the full support of their Government and of their fellow Gibraltarians."