

Exercise A. LISTENING CLOZE You will hear (*twice, with a very short interval*) three recent items of news, presented in a mixture of British and American English. Listen and write into each gap below the **1, 2 or 3 words** you hear.

News Item No. 1: The United Kingdom _____ the European Union's use of the word "colony" to describe the island of Gibraltar. The European Council (a body that _____ the EU's political direction) produced a document regarding UK nationals travelling to the EU after Brexit. It says in a footnote: "Gibraltar is a colony of the British Crown. There is a controversy between Spain and the UK concerning the sovereignty over Gibraltar, a territory for which a solution has to _____." A UK government spokesperson said: "Gibraltar is not a colony, and it is completely inappropriate to describe it in this way. She added: "Gibraltar is a full part of the UK family. This will not change _____ our exit from the EU." Gibraltar is a British Overseas Territory located in the Mediterranean Sea, between Spain and Morocco. It is home to over 30,000 people. In _____, Anglo-Dutch forces captured it from Spain during a war. Spain handed Gibraltar to Great Britain in a 1713 _____. However, Spain still asserts a claim to the territory. It wants Gibraltar _____ from all post-Brexit agreements between the UK and the EU. Gibraltar rejected proposals for shared UK-Spanish sovereignty by 99% to 1% in a 2002 referendum. Gibraltar's Chief Minister has _____ Spain of bullying. He said: "No one will be surprised to hear the Spanish government making provocative statements _____ Gibraltar."

News Item No. 2: It sounds like a dream come true for anyone looking to get on the property _____ - a home for one euro (about \$1.14). A picturesque town on the island of Sicily, Italy, is selling houses for just €1. The bargain price is to attract people to move to the hilltop town of Sambuca, because of a rapid decline in its population. Like many _____ towns in Italy, the number of Sambuca's residents is dwindling, because many young people are moving to cities. The Sambuca Mayor believes the houses will be easy to sell because his town is so attractive. It overlooks the Mediterranean Sea, is close to gorgeous beaches, and has retained its _____, with its cobbled streets and Arabesque architecture. Like all bargains, there is a small catch to the one-euro houses – _____ must

promise to spend \$17,000 on renovating the property within three years of purchasing it. Sambuca's Deputy Mayor said the houses are owned by the town, so there is little of the _____ normally associated with buying a property. He said: "We are not intermediaries who liaise between old and new owners. You want the house, you'll get it in no time." He promised potential buyers would love the town. He said: "This _____ patch of land is dubbed "the Earthly Paradise". We're located inside a Natural Reserve, packed with history. Gorgeous beaches, woods and mountains _____ us. It's silent and peaceful – an idyllic retreat for a detox stay."

News Item No. 3: A satellite start-up company has successfully launched its first satellites in a project _____ delivering "affordable" Internet access to every corner of the globe. The London-based company is called *OneWeb*. Its first six satellites were _____ orbit on Wednesday in a launch from French Guiana. A Russian *Soyuz* rocket transported the pioneering spacecraft. *OneWeb* said it _____ wants to have around 900 spacecraft in an extensive network in space. Only 648 satellites are needed to provide global Internet _____. *OneWeb* will start sending more Internet satellites into space towards the end of this year. The company intends to launch several rockets every month, _____ 39 satellites. *OneWeb* CEO Adrian Steckel was ecstatic about the launch of the multi-billion-dollar project. He said it would greatly transform the lives of millions of people. He told reporters: "We're going to connect lots of people who are not currently connected. We're going to start by _____ connecting schools, connecting boats, connecting planes, and connecting huge swathes of the planet". Not everyone is happy at the prospect of a global Internet network. Reports are that China is testing jammers to block the network. North Korea might also fear the network could damage its national _____. Russia has voiced concerns that *OneWeb*'s network could be used to _____ intelligence.