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Dissent and Adversity: Spain's Foreign and Security Policy in 2005.  
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## **Dissent and Adversity: Spain's Foreign and Security Policy in 2005**

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Spain's foreign and security policy is, like all foreign policy, the result of the interaction between internal dynamics and the changing nature of the international environment. Two schematic ideas allow the reader to understand the most characteristic aspects of this interaction in the case of Spain during the year 2005. On the one hand, in the internal setting, one must talk about the normalisation of dissent between the majority political forces (the PSOE and the PP) in elaborating the country's foreign policy, which, under the formula of "the two visions", has been announced in these same pages over the past few years (Calduch, 2004; Sahagún, 2005). On the other hand, the Spanish Government has found itself faced with an adverse international environment for its "vision". In other words, whereas the Zapatero Government was thinking about a world "without Bush and with a European Constitution", it has found itself in a world "without a European Constitution and with Bush".

This text deals with, in the first place, Spanish foreign policy from the domestic setting, giving importance to several questions: the now classic issue of consensus in our foreign policy (although here we will talk about the normalisation of dissent); the interest of the current Government in the democratic legitimisation of foreign policy; the will of Zapatero and his Government to create its own international identity, one which is clearly differentiated from the Aznar option, and, finally, a reference to the eternal problem of foreign service in our country, to end by noting that, at this time, the country's foreign action is suffering from a problem of lack of policy co-ordination.

In the second place, the text analyses the execution of Spanish foreign policy throughout 2005, in a European and international context that has manifested itself to be adverse. Thus, the crisis of the Union left the Government's Europeanism in the dry dock, while its "cold relationship" with the United States would turn decisions by the Spanish Government in Latin America (Venezuela) into reasons for international tension. Spanish policy throughout the year has been, as will be seen, a mixture of innovation (financial instruments for co-operation for development), repairs (of the relationships affected by the Aznar period, for example those with Morocco) and pragmatism, in the interests of defending economic interests (the case of China). All of this, without repeating the error of the first months of the Zapatero Government, which,

driven by a problem-solving approach, announced ambitious objectives (resolving the conflict of Western Sahara) and even gave inopportune advice (Zapatero's famous declarations in Tunis). In other words, the year 2005 brings a good dose of prudence and realism. The text will stress, to a greater or lesser degree, the noteworthy aspects of both the regional agenda (Europe, Latin America, the Mediterranean and references to China and sub-Saharan Africa) and the issues agenda (co-operation for development, immigration, peace-keeping, the fight against terrorism).

### **Normalisation of dissent and democratic legitimacy**

Gustavo de Arístegui, PP spokesperson on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, began the year 2006 by stating that the PP has “all the right in the world to disagree ideologically (...) with the foreign policy of the Spanish Government” (1). Thus ended a year in which the references to consensus had been constant. The Government began speaking of this as if it meant the recovery of an idealised past, to then go on to lower its expectations and talk of a notion of a limited consensus included in the political debate (Moratinos, 2005a). Despite an occasional call in this sense (the proposal by Rajoy in a party meeting in Sigüenza in January 2005), the PP, for its part, has systematically manifested, through the voices of its representatives, that the differences between the two on international subjects are a question of fundamental, ethical values (Arístegui, 2005).

This left the political culture of consensus behind – a culture linked, at the time, with Spain's need to insert itself into the European and international systems – to enter into a scenario in which Spanish foreign policy refers us to ideologisation (Ortega, 2005) and politicisation (Aixalà, 2005). It was a situation perfectly perceived by the citizens (86% of the Spaniards perceive disagreement between the PP and the PSOE on foreign policy) (BRIE, 2005a). This right to ideological difference, claimed by Arístegui, normalises Spanish foreign policy (2), since foreign policy is not situated on the margin of politics in general (Hill, 2003) and, as such, enters into the ideological and political debate. Moreover, it can be said that it is another symptom of Europeanization, if we bear in mind that the European Parliament is habitually the scene of ideological breaks over international issues between the two large political families of Europe (Socialists and Populists), without fractures due to national logics having disappeared for this reason.

This logical defence of national interests precisely underlies the demands made on the opposition throughout 2005 by Minister Moratinos to reach an agreement in the Spanish Parliament on the negotiation of the financial prospects of the EU for the 2007-2013 period. Whereas agreement was not reached on a case in which they tried to lose, more or less, but lose in sum (politically beneficial for the opposition), on the other hand, the commitment of the PP to the “yes” vote in the referendum on the European Constitution had to be read as a natural limit to dissent. The year 2005 could be considered the year of normalisation of dissent, but it has not been a moment of political debate to deal with these natural limits (minimal basis in terms of the international continuity of Spain) nor any other foreign policy issue. More than a debate on ideas, the year 2005 has left a not very constructive trail of insults, both political and personal.

Assuming the disappearance of the political culture of consensus has caused references to ethical principles and values to emerge among politicians in their discourse on Spanish foreign policy, as we have seen. Legality and legitimacy have been terms of constant reference on the part of the Government to present its actions. Thus we can read in the assessment of the first year of Government, published by the Ministry of the Presidency, that “the Government has placed Spanish international policy under the umbrella of the *force of law* (author’s emphasis)” or that it pursues “the realisation of an authentic democratic foreign policy”. In effect, legitimacy (democracy and citizen support) has been a constant reference for the elaboration of foreign policy in 2005. In regard to citizen support, it must be recalled that this is one of the characteristics that the current Government desired to foster, in order to differentiate itself from the previous administration in this area. In this sense, for example, President Zapatero proposed before the joint session of Congress in June 2005 the creation of a sub-committee to revitalise the debate on the European Union with the society. It could be interpreted as self-criticism by the Government, after the fact, if we bear in mind that neither the Government nor the majority political parties took advantage of a unique opportunity like that of the referendum on the European Constitution to open a public debate and to make the citizenry participants (Torreblanca, 2005a), beyond the formal vote.

In a generic way, however, it can be pointed out that throughout 2005 the Government has provided space for social participation (reform of foreign service, orientation of co-operation for development) and has been widely endorsed by the citizenry, if we heed public opinion polls, on issues such as the social impression of

Spanish policy toward Latin America, the fundamentally European orientation of its foreign policy or its increase in development aid (CIS, 2005). However, the polls make a couple of issues emerge which are worthy of being outlined: on the one hand, that the left-right ideological fracture on international issues is transferred, although to a lesser degree, to society (the issue of relations with the United States is a clear example) (3) and, on the other hand, that some of the publicly relevant options of the Government's options (relations with Chávez or the presence of Spanish troops in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan) are not well-accepted by society (Hugo Chávez is a leader who is valued very poorly by Spaniards (4) or by left-wing social sectors (Spain's presence in multinational operations, in Afghanistan or Haiti, are better received among the right-wing sectors than among the left-wing ones).

Beyond legitimacy stemming from citizen support, the Zapatero Government has strengthened democracy in foreign policy in its discourse, with a greater involvement of the Parliament in decision-making. This has been substantiated throughout 2005 in new developments such as parliamentary diplomacy and the prior authorisation from the Parliament for the participation of Spanish troops in international missions; "for the first time in democracy", as Zapatero pointed out in the joint session of Congress in September 2005. The launch of parliamentary diplomacy has meant the presence of Members of Parliament on trips abroad by the King or by the President of the Government and the designing of an agenda of trips by parliamentary representatives (Iran, the United States), led by the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Congress, Antoni Duran i Lleida.

Whereas, in the area of parliamentary diplomacy, agreement was able to be reached among all of the political forces, on the basis of its positive multiplier effect for Spanish diplomacy, the same cannot be said for parliamentary control of the participation of the Spanish Armed Forces in international operations. The issue gave rise, throughout 2005, to an important polemic between the PP and the rest of the political parties with regard to the Organic Law on National Defence, which was finally passed in September 2005 (with only the PP voting against it). The Government justified the need for this law due to the obsolescence of the previous one (passed in 1980) and to new realities (international missions). No one could fail to see, logically, that the debate on this law has meant a "revision" of the actions of the Aznar Government during the Iraq crisis. The law incorporates an aspect which the PP rejected, prior authorisation from the Parliament for deploying troops (the PP proposed

the examination, not the authorisation, of a prior nature). This issue, which for some groups, like Izquierda Unida, is vital for speaking of authentic democratic control, was criticised from the seats of the PP due to the problems it could cause Spain when it came to fulfilling its international commitments, taken on within the framework of security organisations.

### **International identity and Foreign Service**

Along with legitimacy, the foreign action discourse of the current Government has made ethical principals and values (international legality, solidarity, social justice and multilateralism) a constant, which leads it to redefine lines of action of our country in the international sphere, in issues such as the fight against terrorism (linkage of the fight against terrorism to the fight against poverty and cultural dialogue) or co-operation for development (commitment to doubling Official Development Aid (ODA) during the four years of the legislature). Terms like “ethical and solidary vision” (Pino, 2005a) or “social turn” (Arenal, 2005a) have appeared in recent analyses of the actions of the Zapatero Government. The Alliance of Civilisations proposal is what best symbolises this will to create a new international identity for Spain. This Alliance, co-sponsored by the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Erdogan, and taken up by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, gave rise in 2005 to the first meeting of the High-Level Group, convened by Kofi Annan in Majorca in November. All of this has earned the Spanish Government abundant political rhetorical criticism at home, but it has also marked some new developments, the results of which are not easy to assess as yet, such as the identification of Spanish diplomacy with multilateralism (UN) and multiculturalism (the presence of Erdogan together with Zapatero at the Majorca meeting).

This new direction in foreign policy, in the words of Moratinos (2005b), has met with very hard criticism from the PP. Thus, in the U.S. press, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ana Palacio (2005), has defined the Spain of Zapatero as a Spain that has shrunk, that has gone from having a high profile to becoming a secondary player in the international framework and with a badly defined role. Leaving aside the discourse of political opposition, what is certain is that the positive evaluation of Spain’s change in direction in foreign policy is going to have a great deal to do with the capacity to articulate discourse (in agreement with the majority opinion of Spaniards) with the material interests of the country and to translate it into action strategy (planning of

priorities, definition of objectives, choice of instruments). This immediately suggests questions concerning, for example, the Spanish-Turkish relationship fostered through the joint proposal of the Alliance of Civilisations: does there exist a strategy for developing this relationship, and with what objectives? But, there also arise the usual questions concerning Spanish diplomacy: does it have enough means and manoeuvring room to maintain a proposal-generating policy and an active protagonism in the United Nations?

These questions lead us to deal with issues of political and administrative order, such as the “unavoidable reformation of our foreign service”, in the words of Minister Moratinos (2005b). In this sense, 2005 has been a year of transit, in which the Inter-Ministerial Commission for the Integral Reformation of Foreign Service has elaborated, as was anticipated, a report that has allowed Moratinos to present his own report to the Council of Ministers, with the objective of adopting a Foreign Service Law in 2006. The analysis of the process under way has led to posing questions concerning the construction of a foreign strategy for Spain and to the validity of the principle of unity of foreign action. The establishment of constants and priorities of foreign policy, beginning with a certain consensus among the political forces, and the capacity of analysis and foresight are pointed out as being necessary (Espósito, 2005). The realities of 2005 demonstrate deficiencies in one sense and the other. In the last case, (capacity for analysis and foresight), it is clear that the issue depends both on available resources and on their administration. In the area of the budget, a substantial increase in the Ministry budget has been announced (24% in 2006 in comparison with 2005), linked to the important increase that the area of Co-operation for Development has had (5).

With regard to unity of action, beyond the structural determining factors that affect Spanish foreign policy (membership in the EU, international activity of ministries and regional and local entities), it can be stated that in the area of political management of foreign action, Zapatero is not following the presidentialist model of González and Aznar so far, nor has he taken advantage of the existence of some organs, such as the Foreign Policy Council, to go deeper into policy management. A consequence of that or not, the fact is that throughout 2005, disagreements between Moratinos and the Minister of Defence, José Bono, have become clear on different issues on the agenda, with a clear protagonism on the part of the latter (a secret trip by Bono to Venezuela, in the face of Foreign Affairs concerns about making Colombia uncomfortable, Bono’s denial to Moratinos with regard to an announcement of an arms sales to Angola, the decision

to send Spanish troops on a humanitarian aid mission to Indonesia after the tsunami with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs being unaware of it, a trip to the Philippines by Bono in order to negotiate the suspension of the death penalty for a Spaniard already agreed upon between the Philippine Government and Moratinos).

### **A tour of Europe in crisis**

The Spanish Government's desire to make a "tour of Europe" a central objective for the re-structuring of its foreign policy ran into the hard reality of the crisis of the EU in 2005. The context did not facilitate the objectives of the Spanish Government in European issues. The will to recover its privileged dialogue with France and Germany (the hard core of the tour of Europe), announced from the first moment by the Zapatero Government, continued to be in force on the scene in 2005, marked by the referendum on the European Constitution and the negotiation of financial prospects for the 2007-2013 period. This tour of Europe, which, in September 2004, had already translated into a symbolic Zapatero-Chirac-Schröder meeting, went beyond in March 2005, with a four-way meeting in Paris, with Putin joining the other three. This should be understood as the will of the Franco-German axis to give importance to the "return" of Spain, especially on the part of France. Not in vain has Rodríguez Zapatero been the first Spanish president to be invited to speak before the French National Assembly, in March 2005 and in the middle of the campaign for the referendum on the European Constitution.

The Spanish Government's desire to reaffirm its Europeanism to its European partners is translated, above all, into the fact of Spain being the first country to ratify the Treaty on the European Constitution, signed in October 2004, following a people's referendum. The referendum was convened quickly, for 20 February 2005, and it is clear that the governmental slogan, "The first ones with Europe", simply ratified the Zapatero Government's desire to obtain political benefits, on both a domestic and European level, thanks to the foreseeable victory of the yes vote in Spain. A pull-effect was expected, on the one hand, especially in France (Chirac accompanied Zapatero during the campaign in Spain), and, on the other hand, it anticipated the negotiation of the financial prospects for the Union for the 2007-2013 period, since, in the historical perspective, Spain will be a sure "loser" in the Europe of the Twenty-Five. The Government defended the European Constitution in front of the Spanish citizenry and



asked for their yes vote. Criticism of the Constitution came from both sides: from sectors that supported an affirmative vote and the PP, due to Spain's loss of power in the Council of the EU, and from sectors that were asking for a no vote, like Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, which accused the Constitution of not recognising the identity of the different peoples of Europe, and Iniciativa per Catalunya, which rejected it because it consecrated the Europe of capital and it remilitarised Europe. The lack of social participation in the debate, which, as we have seen, was not fostered by the political forces, led to low participation: 42% of the voters (the lowest participation in an electoral consultation since the implementation of democracy), which did not generate great enthusiasm in Spain nor in Europe. The yes vote won with 76.73% of the votes, although the figure was lower in those communities in which the nationalist debate had been activated during the referendum campaign (64.64% in Catalonia and 62.61% in the Basque Country).

Later events – the victory of the no in France, in a campaign in which Zapatero got directly involved, and in the Netherlands – situate the Spanish Government before the need to position itself in the area of European construction in times of crisis, with the failure of the June 2005 European Council in the area of finance being added to this. Optimism of will is the characteristic of the Spanish Government that, at first, insists on having the ratification process continue, despite the rejection by the Netherlands and France. Finally, the decision adopted in June 2005 by the European Council to open up a period of reflection coincides with the position of the Zapatero Government, according to the Spanish Secretary of State for the EU (Navarro, 2005). The lack of a Plan B on the part of the Spanish Government is manifest, although this does not differentiate it from the rest of the European governments, since the lack of a Plan B has been the norm, not the exception (Torreblanca, 2005b); while in Spain some ideas concerning a possible Plan B have been indicated, such as those subscribed to by the Elcano Royal Institute, which, for example, in a pragmatic spirit has proposed the implementation of dimensions of the CFSP contained in the Constitution, although without their coming into force (Powell et al., 2005). From the opposition, the PP was alert at all times to the process, manifesting itself against any Plan B that would bring about a passage of the Constitution by parts, given that precisely the first part, that which is most susceptible to being passed, is the one that the Populares reject due to the decision-making mechanism in the Council.

## **The dilemma of the glass: half full or half empty?**

The second large issue on the European agenda, the negotiation of its financial prospects, was revealed to be a poisoned one for the Zapatero Government, which is going to be the one in charge of assuming the unavoidable shock of the reduction of its positive balance with the Union, a result, in large part, of Spain's economic success. In addition, the direction of the events (rejection by the Netherlands and France) took away the political weight of the Zapatero Government stemming from the supposed pull-effect of the "Spanish yes". Spain thus arrives at the negotiating framework without the advantages expected from a positive political situation (ratifications of the Constitution) and with a negative panorama, well known, in the area of the budget. This latter problem stems from two undeniable facts. First, the statistical effect situates Spain in a good position in terms of comparative wealth in the Europe of the Twenty-Five; which would leave it out of the Cohesion Funds and could even turn it into a net contributor. Secondly, the determined will of some net contributors, in a situation of economic crisis, to lower their spending ceilings.

The budget negotiation focuses the interest of the two presidency-ending European Councils: that of Luxembourg in June, and that of Great Britain in December. The Spanish arguments defending its position (to not become a net contributor in the 2007-2013 period) are centered on the incorporation of the criteria of gradualness, for the loss of Structural Funds and Cohesion Funds, and the criteria of quality (creation of new Funds with influence on areas in which Spain is deficient, like Technological Innovation). The steps taken by Claude Juncker, as then-President of the Union, achieved Spanish approval of the budgets (a net balance for Spain of 4,783 million euros). Nevertheless, the blockage of an agreement on the part of Great Britain (and other rich countries) led Spain to finally manifest itself against the Luxembourg proposal in the June European Council.

The Spanish decision, which clashed with the expectations of the new European members, has its explanation in the domestic sphere, where the PP had announced that it would consider a net balance of less than 12,000 million euros to be a failure on the part of the Government. Zapatero tried to justify his decision, apart from the interests of the group of the rich countries, by resorting to his Europeanism (defence of the Constitution). At any rate, what is true is that the balance of the first round in the area of the budget ended with a bad image of Spain among many European members (the case

of the new members being willing, even, to reduce their net balances in order to reach an agreement) (Barbé, 2005).

The final agreement on the financial prospects, reached in the December European Council under the British presidency, meant a slight improvement for Spain in the figures achieved in June, translated into a series of accomplishments publicised by the Government (extension of the Cohesion Fund until 2013, creation of a Technological Innovation Fund, resources for immigration policies). Public opinion found itself before a set of changing numbers, depending on who presented the results of the negotiations (the PP indicated that the Government falsified the figures, in incorporating allocations from the previous period into the results of 2007-2013). Apart from the battle over figures, what is true is that the Parliament in general, with the exception of the PP, saw the result in a positive way, although the minority groups distanced themselves from both the triumphalism of the Government and the alarmism of the PP (mentions of Trafalgar, the Invincible Armada and Cuba). A relevant issue throughout the negotiation was Spain's profile in it. While the Government presented itself as an active member and one that proposed initiatives, the PP criticised its irrelevance, in general, and the lack of leadership on the part of Zapatero, in particular (Rajoy, 2005). The context leads us to make two appreciations in regard to this issue. First of all, we must recall that in the framework of negotiations on the financial perspectives, it was the big countries, and net contributors, above all that determined the result (Torreblanca, 2005c), although they had to "listen" and "make concessions" here and there (6); which makes Spain not a determining actor but rather a supporting actor for French-German proposals, which were fundamental for gaining concessions from Blair and reaching an agreement. Neither the German nor the French press, as opposed to the Spanish media, made any mention of a Spain which fostered three-way agreements (France-Germany-Spain). Secondly, the fact must be highlighted that Poland was, if we look at its press, one of the countries which paid the most attention to the actions of the Spanish Government (mentions of its "European change in direction", change in style and success in negotiation). The Spanish referent was so prominent that even Prime Minister Marcinkiewicz boasted in public that Tony Blair had compared him with José María Aznar, due to his having no qualms when it came to defending his country's interests. It is not strange, if we bear in mind that, according to the Polish press, "Poland has entered the club of the playmakers in the Union, substituting Spain to a certain extent" (Pawlicki, 2005). In sum, the negotiating context was adverse for

Spain, with little room for manoeuvring (in the hands of the big countries) and without historical protagonism (in the hands of the recently incorporated countries).

### **From Salamanca to Barcelona: Summit Diplomacy**

Beyond Europe, the two natural areas for Spanish foreign policy are Latin America and the Mediterranean. At the end of 2005, public opinion seems, however, more diversified when it comes to identifying the priority area for our diplomacy (BRIE, 2005b): Europe (44%), Latin America (13%), the United States (13%), the Maghreb (8%) and sub-Saharan Africa (8%), are the most significant ones. From this it can be deduced that two other areas, besides the traditional ones, also occupy a prominent place in the concerns of Spaniards, namely the United States and sub-Saharan Africa. It is clear that in the case of the United States, the priority is in relation to the vicissitudes of the Spanish-U.S. relationship, while the irruption of sub-Saharan Africa among the concerns of Spaniards is the sum of the structural factor (humanitarian concerns) and recent phenomena (sub-Saharan immigration at the fences of Ceuta and Melilla).

Both Latin America and the Mediterranean have given rise to summits organised by Spanish diplomacy in 2005: the Latin American Summit in Salamanca, in October, and the Euro-Mediterranean Summit in Barcelona, in November. In both cases, the regional and international contexts have influenced them in such a way that the objectives of Spanish diplomacy, focused on symbolism (the meeting of high authorities) and concrete results (commitments) have been overshadowed by political determining factors, among others the actions of the United States.

In the case of the Salamanca summit, it came after a year in which Spanish policy toward this region has been relatively intense (trips, multilateral encounters) and at times conflictive. In effect, it can be said that Zapatero's visits to Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile) or the visits of Latin American leaders to Spain (among others, Fox and Uribe) have served to dramatise the political affinity among a good part of the current leaders of Latin America (the new left) and the Socialist Government, highlighting its "privileged relationship" with Brazil (Arenal, 2005a). To these mutual interests, focusing on Spanish investments, one must add a shared political agenda that goes from the assumption, on the part of Spain, of the social responsibility of Spanish investment in Latin America to shared tasks on the international scene (stabilisation

forces in Haiti, defence of the role of the United Nations and multilateralism, the Alliance against Hunger).

The successful reconstruction of the fabric of political relations in Latin America, damaged by the Aznar period, has its conflictive points. Here Cuba and Venezuela must be mentioned. Whereas, at the time, Cuba served the PP, after its 1996 victory, to differentiate its foreign policy from that of the González governments, in 2005 Spanish pressure in the EU has led us to the point of departure. Thus, in January 2005, the Council of the Union adopted a policy of constructive dialogue with Cuba, suspending existing diplomatic sanctions against that country. This decision, which is going to last until June 2006, deserves two comments worthy of reflection: on the one hand, the Spanish Government has been able to see that its room for manoeuvring is smaller in the Union enlarged to include the countries of the former Soviet-dominated Europe (the Czech Republic demonstrated its disagreement with the measure regarding Cuba and forced the Spanish proposal to be cut back) and, on the other hand, the European influence in Cuba is increasingly smaller, in accordance with the island's relationships with China and Venezuela.

Spain's relationship with Venezuela has been the most conflictive issue of the year on the Spanish Government's Latin American agenda. The trips by the Minister of Defence to Venezuela (the first of them, in January, filtered to the press and unbeknown to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), with the objective of negotiating and signing an arms-sales contract, have had strong repercussions, domestically, regionally and internationally. In the domestic sphere, the signing of the contract for the sale of ships and aircraft to Venezuela, for the sum of 1,700 million euros, means the maintaining of 600 jobs linked to shipbuilding in the shipyards of Navantia, formerly Izar, and was thus supported by Minister Bono in the name of national interest. At the regional level, the announcement of this arms sale was followed by a Spanish diplomatic initiative for "putting out fires", the holding of a multilateral meeting between Zapatero, Uribe and Chávez, to deactivate the bad feelings create by this contract in Colombia. Thus, the Zapatero-Uribe-Chávez meeting, held in March, and with *Lula* joining in, constituted a momentary success for Spanish diplomacy. On the one hand, it produced the photograph representing the reconciliation between Colombia and Venezuela, and, on the other hand, it signified a symbolic support for the Spanish initiative on the part of Brazil.

At the international level, the Spanish contract with Chávez has become, in 2005, the keystone of the Bush Administration's unease with the Zapatero Government. The Spanish Government, which receives positive evaluations in Washington in areas such as the fight against terrorism, deserves, nevertheless, very hard comments in the case of Venezuela. In the U.S. press, it can be read that "the Bush Administration, in private, is furious at the support that Spain is giving to the Venezuelan leader in military capabilities, but above all in respectability, given that Spain is a member of NATO" (Vinocur, 2005). Zapatero is accused, in Washington, of playing the role of European legitimiser of Chávez, and, from this, it can be expected that the United States will reject granting permission for the Spanish contract with Venezuela to be fulfilled in the case of the aircraft, given the involvement of U.S. technology. The friend-foe logic with which Washington deals with U.S.-Spain relations, at the expense of Venezuela, is assumed by the PP. Thus, for the MP Muñoz Alonso, "either we are friends with Cuba and Venezuela, or we commit ourselves to normalising relations with the United States. It is impossible to have both things at the same time" (7). The victory of Evo Morales in Bolivia in December 2005 is undoubtedly going to have repercussions on Spain's relations with this Bolivarian (and energetic) America of which Chávez considers himself to be the leader, since the orientation that Bolivia adopts is going to be decisive for either strengthening or weakening this leadership. In any case, what is evident throughout 2005 is that this friend-foe logic applied to the Venezuelan case has affected Spain-U.S. relations. Thus, the improvement in relations between Spain and the United States, linked in large measure to personal factors (Bush-Zapatero), is going to be very much determined by the Chávez issue.

The same logic made itself felt, once again, during the Latin American Summit in Salamanca. Thus, the issue which warranted the most attention on the part of the media was the complaint from the U.S. government with regard to two communiqués concerning Cuba, above all because in one of them it used the term "blockade" to define the U.S. policy toward the island. Beyond the politicisation created by the issue, which led to language revisions in the communiqués, the summit made progress on some the objectives proposed by the Spanish Government to revitalise a process that had lost impetus over the years. Two types of progress can be mentioned: institutionalisation, in the broad sense, and the establishment of concrete objectives. In the first case, one must mention the launching of the General Secretariat, for which Enrique Iglesias was named, with what this means as a political impulse for advancing in the proposals of

institutionalisation (a Latin American voice on the international scene, Latin American civic forums). In the second case, the decisions adopted are based on a regionalising reality – the economic and social ties woven by Spanish investments and by Latin American immigrants – which center the commitments regarding migrations (model of migration management, agreements on social security) and education (literacy plan, knowledge space). To meet the commitments in the area of education, the importance of one of the financial instruments highlighted by the Spanish Government (pardoning of debt for education) has been reiterated. As a consequence of the summit, Spain has assumed concrete commitments in this area with Ecuador, Nicaragua and Honduras. The result of the summit has been called a success in relation to its operative dimension and to its dimension concerning the future, although emphasis has also been placed on the danger of having created excessive expectations with limited resources, in reference to the role expected of the new General Secretariat (Arenal, 2005b; Malamud and Mallo, 2005).

### **More to the South of the Mediterranean**

The Euro-Mediterranean Summit in Barcelona in November ended with a certain aftertaste of failure. Participation in it (only two partners out of the ten to the south, Turkey and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), were represented by their highest leaders) and the result of it (lack of fundamental agreements and of concrete objectives) made Barcelona + 10 unable to play the role of political impulse that Spanish diplomacy hoped for (Barbé and Soler, 2005). The context was not favourable for the encounter. If we confine ourselves to the organisational dimension, it would be good to recall that the summit – an objective in the electoral programme of the PSOE in the 2004 election – was held under the British presidency of the Union. The fact that Great Britain would have preferred a ministerial encounter, the habitual format in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and not the summit promoted by Spain, made it so that the leaders of the south did not receive the input of “obligatoriness”. In fact, Moratinos visited the majority of the partners to the south without the company of his British counterpart, Jack Straw, which sent these partners a European message of little weight. On the other hand, the internal crises of some countries (Lebanon) in addition to calls, it seems, from Condolezza Rice to some of the most prominent partners in the region to make them stay away from Barcelona, did the rest. It is not strange that it was the leaders of the

PNA and Turkey who were the only ones present, since they are the ones who have the most to lose in their relations with the Union in the short term.

The summit revealed, once again, that the Arab-Israeli conflict contaminates the results of the Barcelona Process and that, despite the desires of the Union to initiate a stage of work with concrete objectives and deadlines, the Mediterranean region is, at the moment, resistant to the method. In spite of the will of the Spanish Government (the strong motivation of Minister Moratinos), the summit ended without any document signed by those present, with a code of behaviour on counter-terrorism somewhat equivocal due to the lack of definition of the phenomenon of terrorism itself (Reinares, 2005) and, finally, with a working programme for the next five years based on general proposals which, among other things, talks of achieving an orderly management of migration flows. The manifest objective of the Spanish Government to take advantage of the summit to weave the Barcelona Process into the new instruments of the EU, such as the Neighbourhood Policy (León, 2005), was at any rate rhetorical, in view of which the EU itself still had not been capable of agreeing on its financial prospects for 2007-2013, which raised questions on the level of financial commitment that the Europeans were willing to assume with their neighbours (including the Mediterranean ones). Thus, the Arab-Israeli tension and the crisis in the EU comprised an adverse context for the ambitious objectives of Spanish diplomacy in the Mediterranean.

Spanish policy toward the Mediterranean, aside from the regional framework, is, in good part, determined by its relations with Morocco. It must be said that throughout 2005, these relations have been intense and co-operative, with positive results, such as the signing of a new fishing agreement on the part of Morocco, which will come into force in January 2006, the beginning of construction of the Spanish-Moroccan university in Tetuan (University of the Two Kings) and the guarantees of greater legal security for Spanish investments in the country (Spain is the first investor in Morocco, with more than 600 firms) (Pino, 2005b). State visits and all kinds of encounters, at different levels, have multiplied throughout the year, which has given rise to symbolic encounters, such as the visit by the King and Queen of Morocco in January 2005 (since the year 2000, with the visit of Mohammed VI to Spain, this kind of encounter had not taken place) or working meetings, such as the High Level meeting held in Seville in September. One can talk about sensitive issues that have called attention during these trips, such as the case of Western Sahara, or which have superimposed themselves on the agenda, such as what occurred in the High Level meeting, the working programme



of which (the fight against terrorism, economic co-operation) was altered by the human drama that was taking place those same days at the fences of Ceuta and Melilla, where thousands of immigrants awaited a chance to leap into European territory.

The 30th anniversary of the Spanish withdrawal from Western Sahara coincides in time with a Spanish Government which is pragmatic in its approach to the issue, which situates the solution to the conflict within the framework of the United Nations, without making any mention of the Baker plan, which makes Morocco uneasy. Spain has insisted on asking for the naming of a new special envoy with a prominent political profile, and on offering itself as an interlocutor with the parts. The prudent attitude of the Spanish Government to its Moroccan neighbour has been in trouble throughout 2005, above all when social and political forces of our country (city councillors, Members of the Parliament, members of NGOs, journalists) have manifested their condemnation of the events in the former colony (repression of protests in the streets of El Aaiún, arrests and mistreatment), hence the attempts of some Spanish delegations to travel to El Aaiún, which ended in expulsions to Spain. The reaction of the Government – formal complaints and negotiation with the Moroccan Government so that official parliamentary delegations from the Congress and Senate could travel to Western Sahara – had, without a doubt, costs in terms of public opinion in our country.

Nevertheless, the Spanish-Moroccan issue that has most impacted on Spanish society during the year has been, undoubtedly, the avalanches of sub-Saharan immigrants trying to penetrate Spain through the fences that separate Ceuta and Melilla from Moroccan territory. In the face of a public opinion that distrusts the Moroccan Government (94% of Spaniards believe that Morocco does not do enough to combat illegal immigration to Spain through its territory [BRIE, 2005b]), the Spanish Government has situated the issue in wide co-operative frameworks and, in certain measure, it could be said that for the first time a situation of shared interests has become clear (Morocco feels observed by the Union in its treatment of sub-Saharan Africans in its territory and, with that, it fears compromising its relationship with the EU). Spain and Morocco have transferred the issue to the European sphere, from the most immediate demands (execution of the monetary commitments on the part of the EU for Morocco in order to help it control its borders, the petition on the part of Spain for an EU mission to be sent to analyse the problem on the ground, provision of funds destined for Spain in the financial prospects in order to manage migration flows) to structural solutions (EU policy of legal immigration, Moroccan demand of a Marshall Plan for

sub-Saharan Africa). This last idea coincides with the opinion of Spanish society (96% of Spaniards consider that the best solution against immigration is to help the poor countries to develop [BRIE, 2005b]). The result of Spanish-Moroccan co-operation throughout the crisis has been the joint initiative of organising a Euro-African Conference on Migrations and Development in 2006, which received the immediate support of the European Commission.

In the terrain of short- and middle-term policies, the action of the Spanish Government in sub-Saharan Africa, the origin of many of the illegal immigrants that try to enter Spain, has been especially prominent, if it is compared with that of previous governments. Trips by Minister Moratinos, and Secretary of State Bernardino León to different African countries, before and after the Ceuta and Melilla events, have served to achieve progress in technical co-operation against trafficking in human beings, to negotiate repatriation agreements with some of the countries whose citizens illegally enter Spain (Ghana, Mali) and to offer financial co-operation (food aid, debt forgiveness) to these countries. In other words, the development of a Spanish policy for Africa, which had been pending for many years, is finally inscribed in a framework of objective need for Spanish interests. A sample of the new instruments and the new financing, launched by the Spanish Government, is the creation of Casa África (8). Such instruments, according to the Government, are going to signify a qualitative leap in Spain's relations with the countries and communities involved (MAE, 2005), and all of this, for Minister Moratinos, is the combined result of the demand of the Spanish citizenry and the ethical urgency of the international community (Moratinos, 2005c). To be coherent with such ethical urgency, Spain has to pass an important test in the area of the geographic distribution of its ODA. The 2005 figures, when they can be consulted, will show us the degree to which sub-Saharan Africa has been revalued in the map of Spanish aid (in 2004, sub-Saharan Africa received only 16% of the total Spanish ODA).

### **A safe, just, solidary world**

Countries like those of sub-Saharan Africa that we have just mentioned often live in situations of conflict and underdevelopment. This takes us back to the security agenda, as Spain perceives it, following the European Union strategy ("A Safe Europe in a Better World"). Thus, the dimensions of peace-keeping and co-operation for development plus humanitarian aid, halfway between the two, constitute an area in

which the Spanish Government has made a notable effort. It must not be forgotten that the Zapatero Government began by changing the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to that of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation, which responds to the international identity assumed by the present Government (in the 2006 budget, the area of Co-operation will signify 60% of the Ministry's spending). Speaking about the European Security Strategy also takes us back to defending effective multilateralism, as the current Government does, something which Spain is implementing through its participation in multilateral peace operations, but, to a lesser degree in the field of co-operation for development, as we shall see.

As for the adverse context, it would be good to remember that the year 2005 has been the year of the failure of United Nations reform. To what degree does this failure limit Spanish policy? It is clear that in global terms, it does not favour multilateralism, which is so emphasised in the discourse of the Spanish Government, but, in view of the difficulties that Spain would have had in defending its interests in the face of the reformation of the Security Council and of its current policy of development co-operation, it cannot be said that it has been a great setback for Spanish foreign activity. The actions of the Spanish Government in 2005 in the areas of peace operations and humanitarian aid deserve some comments.

In the first place, let us recall that 2005 has been characterised by great natural disasters with humanitarian consequences, which mark the beginning and the end of the year (the tsunami in Southeast Asia and the earthquake in Pakistan, respectively). In both cases, Spain has been present. In the case of the tsunami, the national deployment of troops on the ground was accompanied by a moratorium in the area of debt, while in Pakistan the Spanish troops were mobilised within the framework of the NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps. The scope of the actions (Spain was, after Great Britain and France, the country which offered the most aid after the tsunami) responds to the Government's desire to make humanitarian aid one of the axes of its co-operation policy (the project of creating an Office of Humanitarian Action within the Spanish Agency for International Co-operation, AECI). However, the option chosen by the Spanish Government (a strong militarization of the aid) clashes with studies by international organisations and by NGOs specialising in the subject, which, over the years, have determined that military operations in the area of humanitarian aid are less effective (due to slowness) and efficient (they have high costs) than those carried out by civilian specialists in the sector. In view of the experiences of 2005, the Spanish NGOs with this

profile have petitioned that the Government's proposal for 2006, namely to dedicate 7% of its ODA to humanitarian aid really be translated into humanitarian aid and that it be assumed mainly by the civilian sector. The case of the tsunami has led analysts to criticise the current Government for repeating a model that it had condemned so much when it was in the opposition, DAF (Development Aid Fund) + Armed Forces. In effect, in the case of the tsunami, 11% of the aid corresponded to the cost of the activity of the Armed Forces themselves and 72% to DAF loans, while the contribution of the AECI was only 11% of the total (Contreras, 2005). In this same order of things, one of the criticisms that Spanish policy receives on the part of experts in humanitarian aid is the low priority that it gives, within its ODA, to aid for health care, since Spain, if one leaves out loans, is in 19th place out of 22 donor countries (Bayón, 2006).

Secondly, Spain participates in multilateral peace operations, of the United Nations, NATO and the EU. Nevertheless, the Spanish profile is clearly not very "U.N.-ian" in this area. In 2005, nine EU countries contributed more forces to the U.N. than Spain. If we observe the Spanish contribution, we see that, with the exception of a few people in some operations in Africa (Congo, Burundi and Sudan), it is concentrated in the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), with 200 Spanish soldiers, which signifies a reaffirmation of the traditional profile of Spain in the area of security within the United Nations, tipping especially toward Latin America. The interpretation of Spanish participation in MINUSTAH could be understood more in terms of its Latin American policy (support for the credibility of Brazil at the head of the operation) than in a "U.N.-ian" turn in Spanish policy.

Thirdly, while Spain has a continuist attitude in regard to its participation in EU operations in the Balkans (Bosnia and Macedonia, with some 1300 soldiers) and also with regard to its commitment to the development of the European Security and Defence Policy, such as the preparations for the launching of the European Gendarmerie Force during 2005 (Barbé and Mestres, 2005), the fact is that the organisation that has seen Spain's commitment increase most clearly is NATO. This is the case of the announcement, following Bush's encounter with his European partners in Brussels in February 2005, of Spain's willingness to train members of the Iraqi army (of course on Spanish soil). However, above all, the greatest Spanish effort has been concentrated throughout 2005 on the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, in which Spain has taken charge of a forward logistical base and a provincial reconstruction team, taking on greater risk and commitment (with a balance, at the end

of the year, of one grave accident in which 17 Spanish soldiers died). Spain also provisionally increased its troops (500 soldiers added to the 540 already deployed) to guarantee the security of the election process. The turning point in the Spanish commitment in Afghanistan could come through the decision of the Government to assume command of the NATO operation in Afghanistan in August 2006, which would signify, to begin with, doubling the number of Spanish troops in that country. It is a decision which, if it is taken, could encounter opposition both in society and in the Congress.

Last but not least, co-operation for development is, without a doubt, one of the most noteworthy aspects of Spanish foreign policy during 2005, and looking forward to 2006, and if we pay attention to the opinion of the experts “the overall balance of the year is positive” (Vera, 2005), aside, logically, from the structural limitations imposed by Spanish (and European) protectionism regarding its agriculture, once again reaffirmed in the World Trade Organisation meeting in Hong Kong in December 2005. Let us remember that if one must seek a differential factor in the Spain’s foreign activity with the Zapatero Government, this is undoubtedly the commitment acquired to increase Spanish ODA to 0.5% of its GDP at the end of the legislature. The budget executed in 2005 has given rise to a 2006 budget that increases the amount of ODA to 0.35% of the GDP, thus fulfilling one of the commitments adopted by Spain in the European Union in the area of co-operation for development. In September, Zapatero had already announced a 37% increase in development aid, to thus reach the objective of 0.35% of the 2006 GDP. This policy coincides, beyond any shadow of doubt, with the feelings of Spanish society (84% of Spaniards consider that Spain should co-operate internationally to solve the problems of less developed countries, despite the economic cost that this may entail) (CIS, 2005). The budgetary leap, stemming from the political commitment acquired by the Spanish Government in winning the election, is clear. Nevertheless, this leap poses some problems concerning its use. One of the financial instruments most emphasised by the current Government, as we have already mentioned, has been the bilateral commitment of converting debt in education, especially in Latin America. These debt-forgiving operations use up a good part of the growth in Spanish ODA, which leads analysts (Sanahuja et al., 2005) to indicate that this postpones the need to improve the Spanish Administration’s capacity for managing larger flows of aid, but, above all, it also leads them to highlight the contradiction existing, in view of what occurred in 2005, between the Spanish Government’s

multilateralist discourse and its bilateral policy when it comes to managing a good part of the growth in its ODA. In 2005, 60% of Spain's ODA has been bilateral, 25% has been channelled through the EU and on 3% has gone to non-financial international organisations. The analysis of what occurs in 2006 in this area will be important for seeing to what extent Spain's bilateralist policy in co-operation for development, tied by definition to the interests of the State, is orientated toward multilateralism.

### **In sum...**

The year 2005 is a "transition year" in regard to foreign policy and security. This is an idea applicable both to the formulation of foreign policy in the domestic sphere and to the management of our country's international agenda. In the domestic sphere, we are waiting for the dissent in foreign policy between the political forces to generate productive debate and, with it, to re-establish some major lines of action accepted by the political forces and Spanish society. The management of the international agenda on the part of the Socialist Government has had two handicaps – the crisis in the Union and Bush's continuance in the White House – which have increased its difficulties to face up to the changes that are "adverse" for its policy, such as the Europe that spins less around the Franco-German axis and Venezuela, which is moving further and further from being a democracy. If we confine ourselves to the year 2005, our country's foreign policy has been characterised by repairing relations damaged in the past few years, such as the case of Morocco and political harmony in Latin America, and by managing interests. In this last aspect, the strategic association established between Spain and China is a good example. The Zapatero's trip to China in July and Hu Jintao's visit to Spain in November have a clear economic backdrop (Spanish investment, Chinese tourism), but they also signify a recognition of the structural changes in the international system. It is clear today, for example, that Spain's (and Europe's) room for manoeuvring in Latin America, a priority for Spanish diplomacy, is limited by China, in addition to the United States. This can also be extended to sub-Saharan Africa, an area which, as we have seen, has gained greater importance on the Spanish agenda during 2005. The current Government has likewise been characterised by creating ethical expectations (Moratinos, 2005c) concerning its actions on the international scene, interpreting the feeling of the Spanish society. Despite certain advances, the Government has demonstrated clear limitations in regard to communication and debate

with society regarding its international activity. It is true that, for 2006, it has announced the launch of a campaign, “Let’s Talk about Europe”, to familiarise Spaniards with the Union’s values and with the benefits of our country’s membership in it (MAE, 2005). So far, it has the benefit of the doubt on the virtues of such a campaign, along with some uncertainties, from an ethical point of view, regarding legitimate decisions adopted by the Government during 2005: the level of relations established with China (similar to those existing between that country and the large countries in the Union, Germany, France and Great Britain); the Spanish decorations awarded to Moroccan civil servants for their activities in the fight against terrorism, but who are accused by international human rights organisations of committing abuses; the guarantees given by Minister Moratinos to the President of Equatorial Guinea that our country will not allow operations against his regime, to which the category of “predatory Government” (Castells, 1997) could be applied; or to the rejection of the proposal to increase air transport fees to finance the Alliance against Hunger. In the face of the existing uncertainties or the incoherencies detected, it is advisable to point out, finally, that the foreign policy of the Government, beyond the defence of Spanish interests, can mark a new line of action regarding co-operation for development, a topic which responds to the demands of Spanish society and in which it has made one more small step with the increase in resources anticipated for the year 2006.

## Notes

1- “La visita de Morales certifica que España ya no está entre las potencias, dice el PP”. *La Vanguardia*, 5 enero 2006.

2- The notion of normalisation, applied to the analysis of Spanish foreign policy, has gone in hand with the notions of Europeanisation, modernisation, pragmatism and realism to define the change in a foreign policy, definitively marked by its entry into the European Community (Barbé 1996a, Barbé 1996b, Torreblanca 2001).

3- Twenty-three percent of Spaniards who classify themselves as being to the right in the political spectrum consider that the Spain’s priority relationship should be the United States, compared with 17% of those who consider themselves in the middle of the spectrum and 5% of those who classify themselves on the left of the spectrum (BRIE, 2005b).

4- Throughout 2005, consideration of Hugo Chávez as a political leader has been worsening in public opinion polls. See BRIE (a,b,c)

5- According to figures from the general budget of the State for 2006 (BOE no. 312, of 30 December 2005), in comparison with those of 2005. The presentation of the budget proposal by the Ministry spoke of a 54% increase, incorporating DAF loans (MAE, 2005).

6- That is, for example, the image the German press has given of countries like Spain or the Netherlands, “nuisance countries” with which it was necessary to hold several bilateral conversations (“Goldener Mittelweg aus dem Haushalts-Labyrinth”, [www.sueddeutsche.de](http://www.sueddeutsche.de), 19.12.2005). The Polish press, for its part, has emphasised that the “frustrated countries”, in reference to Spain, Italy, Belgium and Poland, gave rise to many bilateral meetings in order to lay out their demands and reasons (“Marcinkiewicz o budzecie UE: yes, yes, yes”, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17.12.2005). The author is grateful to Anna Herranz and Michael Natorski for the references concerning the German and Polish press, and to Laia Mestres for ample documentary support for producing the present text.



7- “El PP critica una venta de buques y aviones a Venezuela de 1.000 millones”. *El País*. 15 marzo 2005.

8- A Casa Árabe and a Casa Sefarad were also created, which add to the already existing Casa de América and Casa Asia.

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