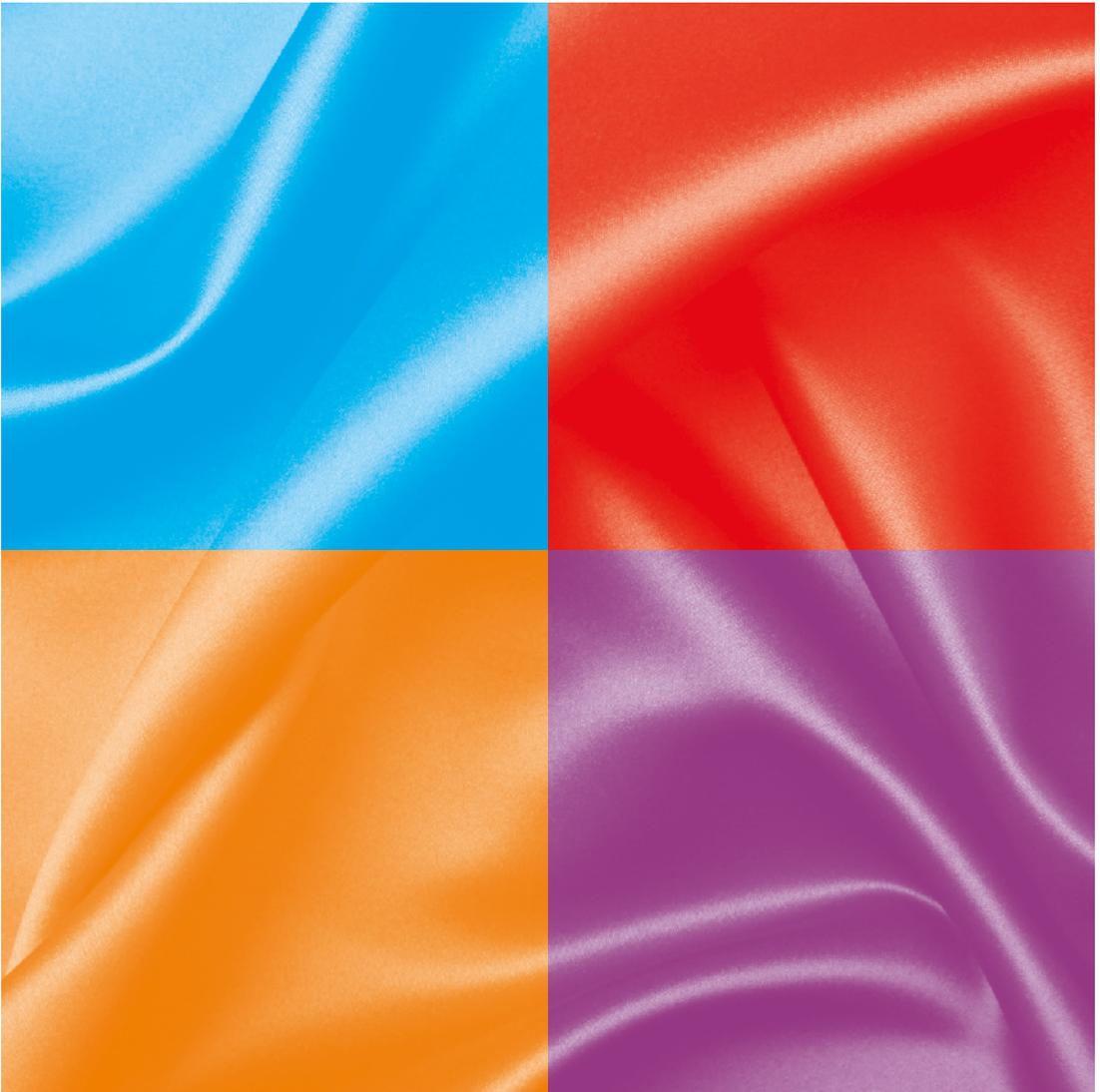


The 2015 Spanish General Election: Political parties' international priorities



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Presentation

The Elcano Royal Institute, which is about to celebrate its 15th anniversary, has been working on three tasks over the course of its short but active history that are appropriate to a laboratory of ideas. In the world of think tanks, where the English language predominates, the three words that denote these tasks all begin with the letter “A”: analysis, assessment and advice. Our institute does indeed concern itself with carrying out international and strategic studies with the greatest degree of rigour possible and, as a result, throughout this time we have been providing both our society and the foreign reader interested in a Spanish perspective with serious and sophisticated knowledge on these matters. But our efforts extend beyond the provision of solid and detached analyses, because there is also a significant critical and, above all, prescriptive component, which is what sets us apart from an exclusively academic research centre. Setting out from a position that is independent but also committed to the collective interests of the country, our reports and documents venture to assess prospective opportunities and threats, indicate our shortcomings, identify good comparative practice, and note potential innovations that might enable Spain (whether its public sector, its civil society or its population in general) to insert itself into globalization and the process of European integration.

The difficult situation we have all faced in recent years has strengthened us in the conviction that the future of Spain resides, to a large extent, beyond its borders and we have to raise awareness of the fact that a good connection with the exterior is fundamental for the success of the country: an advanced democracy that benefits from security and that improves its prosperity on the sustainable foundations of competitiveness, social inclusion and respect for the environment. We are, moreover, a mid-ranking power that can exercise effective influence on the world – defending our interests and promoting our values and ideas – and that should also take on important responsibilities beyond its borders. This is why at the Elcano Royal Institute, far from taking refuge in an ivory tower of pure thought, we have redoubled our efforts in the practical side of our research. We thus aspire to be an authentic laboratory of ideas and a workshop of knowledge at the service of Spain (and, by extension, of the European Union, of Ibero-America and the incipient global Governance), using our expertise to critically evaluate reality and ultimately giving constructive recommendations as to how it can be improved.

Indeed, over the course of the parliament that is now coming to an end we have been especially active in this area of applied thought. During these years the Institute's Action Plans have been clearly focused on reassessing Spain's international and European position in the context of the crisis and the major upheavals in our environment. There are many publications and activities that deserve mention but allow me to give a necessarily brief summary that at least includes the important 2014 report "Towards the strategic renewal of Spain's foreign policy" (which we undertook autonomously but in dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and with almost 200 experts, public decision-makers, representatives of civil society and all the political parties). That document was later partly included in the Foreign Action Strategy that the Spanish government approved less than a year ago, just as a similar work undertaken at a European level and in collaboration with Swedish, Polish and Italian think tanks (the 2013 report entitled "Towards a European Global Strategy: Securing European Influence in a Changing World") is now influencing the drafting of the EU's new Global Strategy, which Federica Mogherini will be presenting to the European Council in 2016.

It is also essential to mention our contribution to the National Security Strategy, which was revised in the summer of 2013 and has given rise to various single-sector sub-strategies. The Institute ensured that the approved document would have continuity with that carried out in the previous parliament, so that the idea of updating rather than providing a simple replacement could strengthen the consensus between the various political actors. Alongside our global terrorism programme and many other analyses of security, addressed without exception from a comprehensive perspective that transcends strict defence issues, it is also worth highlighting the 2014 report entitled "Spain, looking to the South" on the strengths and weaknesses of our relations with the vast region that extends from the south of the Mediterranean to the Sahel.

We have also made significant efforts to ensure that the Spanish perspective should help shape the debate on the future of the Eurozone – excessively dominated by the narrative of certain central countries – and here it is worth highlighting the 2014 study "How to Fix the Euro: Strengthening Economic Governance in Europe," jointly published with Chatham House and AREL. Many other studies into the security of investments abroad, risks and opportunities for the Spanish economy, development aid, energy and climate change complete our contribution to the economic sphere. And to conclude this necessarily brief summary, it is important not to overlook other outstanding facets of the Institute's output: the ongoing project to measure Spain's presence in Brussels, the series on our bilateral relations (with Brazil, Morocco, Mexico, Algeria, etc.), the collection of annual

perspectives and challenges entitled “Spain in the World”, the Observatory of Spain’s image abroad (OIE), the veteran Barometer of Opinion (BRIE) and the now well-consolidated Global Presence Index, which ranks Spain as the 11th country in the world with the greatest international presence in absolute terms.

The time has now come to address another key moment in Spain’s insertion into the world: the general election of 20 December. The present publication represents a further step in this attempt to analyse, assess and make recommendations regarding the role that we play and that we can play in international affairs. In a few days Spaniards are going to cast their verdict on a range of political projects at the ballot box and it strikes us as essential that the international and European agenda is present in the election debate. We thus decided some months ago to draw up a questionnaire that would endeavour, first, to interrogate the main political parties about their foreign priorities and secondly to offer the electorate and observers information and commitments on such matters. The novelty of this study is that the main role is taken by the representatives of the four political parties that – according to all the opinion polls – will obtain sufficient votes and parliamentary representation to enable them to effectively shape Spain’s future foreign policy until 2020. From its neutral position the Institute prefers that it is they who freely express the outlines of their programmes and sincerely extends its gratitude to their leaders (in the case of PP and PSOE) and their foreign affairs representatives (in the case of Ciudadanos and Podemos) for having agreed to answer our questions. Neither our appreciation nor our relatively restricted protagonism are an impediment to our critical and prescriptive approach however, either in the brief introductory analysis or in the design of the questionnaire.

And as a demonstration of this demanding approach, allow me to conclude with a lament that is directed not at one party in particular and perhaps not even all of them together, but rather at our country as a whole. It is clear that we find ourselves at a crossroads in our political system and that this election will be critical relative to those held since the end of the transition to democracy. Many important issues are at stake: the economic model after many years of crisis, the future of the welfare state, a possible institutional reform, momentous developments in territorial organisation and the strengthening of the very legitimacy of our democracy. But among all these undoubtedly transcendental issues, I regret the fact that the debate on our foreign and European policy does not also occupy a central position. This is a collective criticism of our political and social agents, of our intelligence, of the media, perhaps of the electorate itself, excessively wrapped up in domestic concerns. There are enormous global challenges that we cannot afford to ignore (security, the economy, development,

energy, migration, science and culture), just as we cannot ignore our role in the great regional spheres (above all Europe, Latin America, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic but also the Asia-Pacific region and sub-Saharan Africa). Attempting to fill this gap in the electoral debate and to champion, before and after the election, the importance of this agenda are the two main motivations of this publication.

Emilio Lamo de Espinosa
Chairman of the Elcano Royal Institute

What can we expect of Spain's foreign and European policy over the course of the next parliament? Continuity and change in the programmes of the four main parties

Last summer, looking ahead to a political calendar that included a general election at the end of the year and with all the opinion polls indicating the dominance of four parties, the Elcano Royal Institute decided to put to these political forces a series of questions on the major issues of foreign and European policy. The 20 or so questions that were posed, set out one by one in what follows, seek to offer the reader a more or less complete, although not excessively detailed, overview of the main priorities in the foreign agendas of the Spanish political parties. Bearing in mind that any governing permutation will involve these parties, the present document also serves as a means of determining the extent to which we can expect continuity or change and agreements or disagreements in the field of Spain's foreign relations over the course of the 11th parliament, which will commence in 2016 and in theory is due to conclude in 2020.

The first major conclusion points to a significant degree of convergence. Reading all four of the completed questionnaires suggests that – while there are differences of detail, intensity and focus – the parties have a similar way of conceiving the general outlines of Spain's foreign policy. It is true that the “new” parties (Ciudadanos and Podemos) seek to provide innovations, contrasting with the traditional content that continues to characterise the discourse of the “old” parties (PP and PSOE). Thus, despite the ideological differences that separate them, both of these pairs reproduce in a virtually identical way their response to the question concerning the three major priorities for the next four years. Both Mariano Rajoy and Pedro Sánchez, who respectively provided the answers for the PP and PSOE questionnaires, single out the immediate environment (the EU), the other strategic regions (the Mediterranean, Latin America) and multilateral objectives. Podemos and Ciudadanos somewhat surprisingly pick out procedural aspects such as improving decision-taking, transparency and accountability, placing higher emphasis on new issues (democracy, development, citizen involvement, Spanish talent) than on the classic geographical formulation.

In general however, while the phrasing used to express certain positions may occasionally be perceived as divergent, there is a unifying central thread that in our view can and should foster political dialogue and serve as the basis for achieving a significant degree of consensus over the course of the next parliament. This predisposition towards consensus translates into certain specific areas where wide-ranging agreement already exists, such

as the need for good relations with Morocco, or the importance placed on the Spanish language and culture, but also affects areas where stances on the face of things are more distant. Thus, despite the criticisms of the three opposition parties towards the current orientation of Spanish diplomacy, they all agree that there is potential for Spain to have greater sway and projection in the world, that the “country-strategy” has the potential to be a good public diplomacy initiative, and the strategic exercises in the major spheres of foreign deployment and security are positive. It is also worth pointing out the shared emphasis on multilateralism – in principle under the mandate of the United Nations and subject to parliamentary control – that all parties place on the perennially controversial question of military missions abroad.

In short, there is a high degree of convergence in terms of identifying the elements that may form the basis of consensus on foreign policy. And along with the references to the most important tasks facing Spanish foreign policy, there is broad and novel agreement on the need to construct a “social consensus” that strengthens the political consensus surrounding Spain’s foreign policy.

For obvious reasons, disputes emerge more starkly when it comes to evaluating current foreign policy, whether the judgement is made by the governing party or the opposition parties: the former being more approving, the latter more critical. Apart from negative assessments of a generic character – such as those referring to Spain’s alleged loss of influence – the specific areas where dissent with the post-2011 record are most explicitly expressed relate to the management of such issues as energy dependency, cuts to development aid, the emphasis given to “Marca España” and the lack of agreement surrounding the Foreign Action Act (issues that are criticised by all three opposition parties). Podemos is the most critical of the three and attacks other aspects of security policy (especially, the revision of the defence agreement with the US), negotiations surrounding the TTIP and the alleged abandonment suffered by the Western Sahara.

By contrast there are also certain areas where agreements are especially notable: for example, in the favourable stance on Europe and the commitment to greater European political integration, although not all the parties give explicit support for a federal model of Europe. In general, bearing in mind the Eurosceptic currents swirling around almost all the member states and the reduction in Spaniards’ confidence in the EU during the crisis and the accompanying austerity measures, it is notable that all respondents go out of their way to express their support for the European project and that Podemos even emphasises that the accusation that the party, its members and supporters are against Europe is a “myth”.

No less remarkable is the attention and amount of detail given to some of the answers relating to Spain's energy policy. As well as references to Spain's energy mix, a commitment to a change of model and issues relating to climate change, there are new approaches and proposals that elevate energy policy to the position of a significant strategic variable in our foreign policy and in Spain's geopolitical positioning. It is here also that it is possible to perceive a phenomenon alluded to by Mariano Rajoy in his first answer, namely that the boundaries between foreign and domestic policy are nowadays highly blurred.

By contrast there seem to be few new ideas contained in the answers referring to Spain's relations with Latin America and the revival of the Ibero-American community. Although no profound differences emerge, we believe that the parties' approach is excessively vague and it is therefore necessary – even urgent – to engage in a process of reflection and pooling of ideas that incorporates the new dynamics, some of great significance, that are unfolding in the region, one that lays the foundations for a solid and coherent strategy for Spain to follow vis-à-vis Latin America and its surrounding area and, in particular, towards Spanish-speaking countries. Running in the same direction, the answers address the need to encounter a new model of cultural dissemination, an essential aspect of foreign policy and our public diplomacy, where the Cervantes Institute, extending its presence throughout the Spanish-speaking world, would assume a broader and larger role.

Among the most glaring omissions (although here it is important to recognise the influence of the wording of the questionnaire, inclined as it is towards certain issues), there is a surprising lack of attention given to the United Nations Security Council, of which Spain is now a non-permanent member, and in general hardly any reference to multilateral governance or the responsibility that Spain can have at the G20 and other global forums (on human rights, climate, migration, gender equality and terrorism). And while it is true that the questionnaires were completed before the Paris attacks, there are hardly any mentions of the jihadist radicalism stemming from Daesh or generally to the war in Syria/Iraq. Nor does the refugee crisis seem to have the same importance for Spanish parties as it does for political forces in other European countries. Finally, another omission in the responses, except perhaps in the case of Ciudadanos, is the failure to refer to the internationalisation of the Spanish educational, scientific and technological system or the new opportunities abroad for a country that can see economic recovery on the horizon.

Responses to the section referring to organisation, procedure and resources vary from satisfaction with the current model expressed by the government (once the reforms of the recently-adjourned parliament have

been approved) to the demand for a more significant role for the prime minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation made by both Pedro Sánchez and Ciudadanos. The former also takes the opportunity to advocate the role of the Autonomous Communities, while the latter criticises the politicisation of the diplomatic service. Podemos places great importance on the creation of an Office of Human Rights within the ambit of the prime minister's office and a Citizens' Council for Foreign Policy. Lack of money is only regretted in the context of development aid: nobody argues for more spending on defence or on diplomatic deployment.

Against this backdrop, the question regarding what can be expected of Spain's foreign and European policy between 2015 and 2019 – an issue of undeniable interest in the run-up to the election – has a reassuring answer: continuity and dependence on the domestic agenda. After years of serious difficulties, which will not disappear in a hurry, it seems that a certain climate is becoming established among the parties (even among the “new” parties, which rail against the ills of bipartisanship) involving somewhat improved expectations concerning the role that Spain can play in the world and even some positive transformations in the international context that may contribute to this (Tunisia, Colombia and Cuba). They also recognise the conflicts of course (highlighting Ukraine and the perennial Middle East), and unsettling multilateral challenges (pandemics, climate change, radicalisation, poverty and inequality). Meanwhile the development of the European project, whereby all four parties want the EU to be able to speak with its own voice in the world, faces serious challenges and shortcomings that encumber its effectiveness.

Prior to concluding, and with the agreeable sensation stemming from well-answered questionnaires still fresh in the mind, it is necessary to make a final observation regarding the lack of political importance the four parties seem to attribute to international issues in the central part of their programmes. Although such a low profile may help to secure major agreements – given that foisting ideology on foreign policy leads to disagreements, as happened for example at the start of the 1980s on the issue of NATO or in 2003-4 with the issue of the Iraq War – the fact that greater political importance is not given to this field is a cause for concern. Indeed it seems extraordinary that not one of the responses to this questionnaire or the content of the subsequent foreign affairs sections of the manifestos expresses a single one of the parties' main messages of the election campaign. It is clear that this will turn on domestic issues (economic recovery, austerity and inequality, the fight against corruption, the challenge to sovereignty in Catalonia, constitutional reforms, etc.) and it is possible that voters will opt for one or another party based solely on assessments of domestic politics.

It may be interesting to conclude this analysis however by recalling what took place a few weeks ago in another general election in a country with a global standing similar to Spain's, namely Canada, which occupies ninth place in the Elcano Global Presence Index and is therefore a short distance from Spain (in 11th place) in terms of foreign presence. The candidates running for the prime minister's office in Canada, a country that also faces significant domestic challenges of the economic and institutional variety, took part in a single-subject debate on foreign policy, and many analysts agree that this was the baptism of fire that catapulted Justin Trudeau, now leader of the government, to his lead in the polls. Something like this would be sadly unthinkable in Spain today, which overlooks its status as a mid-ranking power. Neither Spain's current political leaders nor their voters seem to be aware of the privileges and responsibilities that come with this status. Denying reality when it is disagreeable is understandable, but it is far less so when it involves undervaluing or scorning a situation with great potential. What is more, unless one believes in the important international position and role that Spain has or may have, it is difficult to be able to believe in the very project of the country itself. However much it denies to itself its own international standing, such a standing exists and from our perspective we would like to conclude that... *eppur si muove*.

Rafael Estrella
Deputy Chairman

Ignacio Molina
Senior Analyst

1. In your estimation, what will the three major priorities for Spanish foreign policy be over the next four years?



First I would like to make a twofold observation. Spain's integration into the EU, globalisation and the technological revolution, particularly in communication, sometimes blur the lines between traditional foreign policy and domestic policy. I firmly believe that the foundations for an active foreign policy rely on Spain continuing to strengthen itself internally: on Spain becoming stronger. Political and economic stability are the keys to this. Spain's loss of relative international influence, which I had to deal with on coming to power, was to a large degree a reflection of domestic weaknesses. Spain's credibility abroad starts with getting our own house in order and ensuring things run smoothly.

Regarding the three priorities of your question:

(a) To enhance the stability of our immediate environment: the EU and the Mediterranean. We should continue to deepen the process of integration in Europe. In this period of office we have strengthened the Union, making progress on banking union. In the future we will need to make headway on fiscal union and on political union. In the Mediterranean we need to support our neighbours to improve their security, their institutions and their economic and social development.

(b) Transatlantic relations in a broad sense: the triangle linking North America, Latin America and Europe. In these three regions we share basic values and principles: freedom, respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law, free trade and so on. Spain was born European and American. She should continue being so today, directing a major part of her efforts towards strengthening this triangle.

(c) To advance on a number of horizontal fronts that are formulated in the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals, among others: the fight against poverty and hunger, ensuring inclusive education, achieving gender equality, ensuring the availability of water and the fight against climate change.

PSOE

My ambition for Spain is that it returns to being active, important and influential in the EU and in the world, with a foreign policy that serves its citizens, that defends its interests and protects its values. Our foreign policy, together with the rest of our partners and friends, should provide ideas and initiatives to solve global challenges. To this end we will act chiefly in three areas:

- (a) In the EU, because our country's foreign policy extends furthest when we work together and in coordination with the rest of the member states.
- (b) In those strategic regions where we can foster progress and shared security, such as Latin America, the Maghreb, the Sahel and the Middle East.
- (c) In the multilateral institutions, to build a fairer, more balanced and sustainable world.

C's
Ciudadanos

In Ciudadanos we believe that foreign policy is a policy of State. The priorities must therefore be determined on the basis of the greatest possible degree of political consensus. Spain needs to regain something it has lost in recent years: its role as an important player in constructing Europe, world governance and the dissemination of our values through our cultural ties. We suggest three core strands will be decisive in the forthcoming parliament: the institutions, Europe and citizens.

The first strand is related to the need to introduce meritocracy and excellence into the construction of our foreign policy in order to improve planning, design, evaluation and accountability. It is a matter of depoliticising the public sector and strengthening the truly political, especially the parliament, the prime minister's office and the Autonomous Communities, furnishing them with the resources needed in adapting our foreign deployment to its environment. Our diplomatic efforts should emulate the model of the Spanish diplomatic mission in Brussels. It is also essential to integrate important external agencies (think tanks, academia, NGOs and so on) in a more effective way under the principles of transparent and competitive participation.

The second strand is related to the active role that Spain should play in the political integration of the EU, which requires better coordination at the ministerial level and greater political leadership. The Secretary of State for the EU should report to the prime minister rather than the foreign minister. Meanwhile there are insufficient

planning and intelligence-gathering organisations, and nor is there an internationalisation strategy for centralised knowledge.

The third and final strand is the citizen, where transparency and accountability take on a central role. Furthermore we cannot allow Spanish talent abroad to be disconnected from our national project. The cultural, scientific and technological arenas and certain professions should be incentivised to collaborate with the State so that every personal project can be integrated into our strategy.



First we would like to re-focus the priorities of Spain's foreign policy. Instead of the current emphasis on defending economic, security and geopolitical interests, we advocate a different agenda, one that is integrated and multidimensional, and places the emphasis on what we call the "3 Ds" of Podemos's international policy: human rights and gender equality, democracy and sustainable and equitable development. These "3 Ds" will underpin the entirety of our government's foreign conduct. Far from being a theoretical declaration, it is our intention that these three principles manifest themselves in reality, that they be practical and binding, and we have structured and devised our programme of foreign policy and aid on this basis.

Secondly, we hope to change the way that Spain's foreign policy is elaborated and carried out. We want a more transparent, democratic and inclusive foreign policy, constructed with the participation with all the stakeholders involved (the government, parliament, regional and local governments, civil society, etc.) founded on basic areas of consensus that outlive political fluctuations.

Finally we have set ourselves the goal of increasing the decision-making input of the general public in foreign policy. Until now foreign policy has been off limits to ordinary people, who have been kept completely in the dark about extremely important decisions that the government has taken in the international sphere. We thus wish to increase the level of information and debate on foreign policy matters in the public arena, and encourage citizens to take a more active part in our foreign policy by creating mechanisms of participatory democracy and furnishing them with accountability on the major foreign policy decisions.

Our manifesto includes the tools that make these three goals attainable.

2. Do you think that Spain's international weight and standing are consistent with its size and ambitions? What measures and initiatives do you propose to enhance Spain's international role?

Clearly in Spain – as in all countries – there is a series of historical, geographical, demographic, economic and political factors. What concerns me personally, more than determining our weight at any given time, is our level of ambition. As I have said, the crucial thing is to be a strong and stable country. On this foundation our labours, our wits, our dynamism and our determination will enable us to project ourselves abroad, be better, influence more. It is sometimes said with a certain tone of fatalism-cum-resignation that we cannot “punch above our weight”. I believe that, if we proceed carefully, we should always aspire to more and make the effort to achieve it. Reducing our level of ambition does not seem reasonable. And let us remember one thing: more weight brings more responsibility.

Currently, until December 2016, Spain is a member of the Security Council, after a campaign requiring considerable effort on our part. This is evidence that our good offices are recognised by the international community. Our membership of the Security Council lends us great international prominence that also entails responsibility and a chance to influence decisions. I set great store by the United Nations system and membership of the Security Council, which is why I have requested to chair one of its sessions devoted to Women, Peace and Security.

Spain is not playing the role that it ought to at the moment, nor is it taking the share of international responsibility that our citizens and our partners and friends expect. Spain should once again occupy the international position befitting its population, economy, culture and history. We should be present in all the forums where issues are decided that affect our country and our citizens. We should do this in a proactive way, with ideas and proposals, working jointly with the other members of the international community. Our country should restore some of its own unique hallmarks in the world, which we currently lack, acting as a:

- (a) Promoter of a new long-term drive for the EU.
- (b) Participant with its own constructive voice in resolving challenges, at least in Ukraine, the Maghreb, the Sahel, the Middle East and Latin America.

- (c) Leader in international solidarity and the promotion and defence of human rights.
- (d) Innovator in migration, asylum and refugee policies.

Our international presence is reactive, lacking in strategy and short-termist, reflecting the amount of the political capital invested. Traditionally having a certain political visibility has been more highly valued than generating a real impact or defending the interests of our citizens. At C's we look for long-term projects with political ambitions tied to the general public. There are plenty of examples of this approach (the Union for the Mediterranean, the Alliance of Civilisations and so on) being adopted by the most recent PP and PSOE governments, which have then failed to back the opportunity with a coherent strategy and leadership at the political level. Spain has the potential and the capacity to leave much more of a mark internationally if it takes better advantage of its human capital and invests in reforming its economic, political and social organisation. A good way to project itself beyond its borders is to be exemplary in spheres such as the competitiveness of its companies, SMEs and entrepreneurs, in R&D&I, in social innovation and cultural production. We need a more mature internationalism and a more committed Europeanism in our political ranks, our administrations and our civil society. To achieve this it is necessary to attract talent and invest in the human capital of professionals who collaborate in our foreign policy. Some of our measures are focused in this area: the creation of scientific consulates, the reform of the aid worker statute, transparency in the appointment of ambassadors and a reform of regulations governing the Congress of Deputies.

Spain is a medium-sized power capable of exercising a certain amount of regional influence. Our geostrategic position, on a frontier, determines our natural setting, namely Europe, and also a key zone of influence, the Mediterranean and the Arab world. Our history also provides us with a special presence in and relationship with Ibero-America. In these areas of influence we operate with a comparative advantage and this accounts for them being our traditional priorities in foreign policy.

Over the last 30 years however, European integration has taken up the greater part of our international efforts, understandably enough given the need to overcome the isolation of the Franco dictatorship. Europe had been an outstanding task awaiting attention.

We believe that in order for Spain to become an “international benchmark” and strengthen its capacity for taking the initiative, it will need to create its own profile within the European framework,

adopting and developing a foreign policy consistent with its motivating principles, that of defending human rights and placing the common good ahead of partisan or national interests. This is where the “3 Ds” that govern the whole of our foreign policy, both in theory and in practice, come in: they place us in a position of leadership, and give us scope for transversal action, to be recognised as a player that is committed to human rights and gender equality, to democracy and sustainable development across the width of the international stage.

3. The European Union (EU) seems a long way from attaining its goal of becoming a global player: how do you think the EU's position in the world and its influence on international affairs can be strengthened?

The EU is already a global player: it is the world's major trading power (with 16.5% of the world's imports and exports), it is the leading donor of development aid and it is a decisive actor in promoting such international norms as the protection and promotion of human rights and the rule of law. Its initiatives in the foreign policy arena (for example the role it has played in the recent nuclear agreement with Iran) and its peace and security missions (the fight against piracy, etc.) exemplify this important role.

Over recent years however Europe has been trying to cope with the greatest economic crisis it has suffered since the European project began. And this crisis has highlighted the fact that if the EU wants to strengthen its role in the world it needs to start by strengthening itself. The reform of the Economic and Monetary Union – the design defects of which became apparent during the crisis, the finalisation of the internal market, the creation of a genuine energy market, and going further in the creation of an area of freedom, security and justice, developing a shared policy on asylum, immigration and the control of external borders in close collaboration with originating and transit countries: these are the challenges that the EU is addressing and which will enable a more cohesive Union to emerge, something that will undoubtedly reap dividends in terms of strengthening its position in the world.

The High Representative for Foreign Affairs is clearly committed to providing greater coherence to the Union's various foreign dimensions. Spain has been calling for a strengthening of the Common Security and

Defence Policy (CSDP), moving towards, as the EU Treaty indicates, the progressively clearer definition of a common defence policy. From a multilateral perspective they should also take advantage of regional associations to give the EU a larger role on the international stage (the United Nations, the G20, etc.).

Spain also supports the setting up of mechanisms enabling greater integration and efficiency in improving the decision-making process in the foreign policy and common security arena. Over the medium to long term it would be beneficial to broaden the issues upon which decisions can be taken by qualified majority voting in the Council and to improve the EU's single negotiating position on the international stage.

The EU is indispensable for our prosperity and security, for the defence of peace and human rights and for ensuring sustainable development and the fight against poverty. We need the EU in order to control globalisation. And in order for the EU to become a global player we need to assure ourselves that it enjoys all the basic capacities to respond to any crisis, of any nature, and to avoid division between member states, something that undermines European diplomacy.

In order to be a global player it first has to have a common policy backed by the political consensus of the member states. To this end immediate steps need to be taken that re-establish the political trust lost during the crisis and seriously address in the medium term an institutional reform capable of attaining the greater political union required. We believe that there is a great deal of scope for adopting common positions at, for example, the United Nations Security Council, where we support a unified seat for the EU, and amalgamating representation at multilateral institutions. But we should not forget that the credibility of the EU depends to a large extent on the success of its own construction and the institutions in which it participates. In this regard the European Council's lack of credibility and the euro crisis have eroded our reputation abroad. Europe should be less reactive and more strategic, more assertive on specific issues such as the promotion of democracy and human rights and more pragmatic on issues that affect it directly (security, defence, migration, stability among its neighbours, energy, etc.).

We believe that the EU will only be able to reaffirm itself in the world to the extent that it is able to transmit the singularity of the European integration project on a global scale. We refer here to the hard core of a social and a value-based European model.

Determined defence, the improvement and strengthening of a European social model based on human rights, gender equality, democracy and sustainable and inclusive development and the example of peaceful and tolerant coexistence between our 28 nations should also serve as our hallmark in international debates and the basis for the current review of our foreign and common security policy launched by the high representative and due to be unveiled in 2016. But these values should be binding and translate into day-to-day practice, and this involves making a radical change to the direction of Europe's economic policies.

It is essential that such values prevail over geopolitical and economic interests and certain security-focused lines of reasoning that today dominate the foreign agenda of Europe and its member states, which is evident, for example, in the way the current refugee crisis is being handled. This crisis demonstrates the failure both of the EU's foreign policy (towards Syria and the Middle East) and its asylum and migration policies, which for a long time have placed greater priority on the protection of borders than on the protection of the human rights of people in transit. This is precisely what we have to change in order to have more Europe, a different Europe and a better Europe.

4. As a goal over the medium and long terms, would you favour a federal Europe or moving decisively towards a genuine “United States of Europe”?

Without entering into debates about names, which tend to cause divisions, it is clear that the dynamic of European integration naturally leads to sharing sovereignty. Economic integration requires political integration in order to furnish our common institutions with democratic legitimacy. Furthermore, the same international dynamic demands common responses to global problems that cannot be solved by each country acting independently: we face barely any issue of importance – whether it is the immigration and refugee crisis, the economic crisis or the challenges to our security in the east and south of Europe, etc. – that cannot be given a more effective response if it is from a unified European perspective.

Social democracy as a whole has always backed the European project, which is perceived not simply as the establishment of a vast market but also as a political project based on solidarity, mutual interest and sovereignty shared between countries. Hence European socialists, including of course PSOE, persist with the aspiration that the EU will

become a supranational entity of a federal nature. At the same time the member states wish to retain some of the instruments needed to develop their own domestic policies. A federal Europe is thus the option that best fits the two desires.

Yes. Europe provides the best political prospect for safeguarding and defending our freedoms, rights, wellbeing and security. But progress will not be linear or continual. We will need to make interim concessions in pursuit of future gains and act strategically in favour of our citizens' interests. We should not assume that either democracy or freedoms are consolidated in Europe. We should think beyond the status quo and innovate politically. For example it would not be outlandish to think about steps that could be taken immediately to prevent the European Commission being vetoed or steered by the Council in specific circumstances such as humanitarian crises or threats to our security.

To the extent that it is based on the values mentioned in our previous answer, yes. The strangest thing about the whole debate surrounding the "Europe" section of our manifesto was dismantling the myth that the members and supporters of Podemos are against the European project. Quite the opposite. Podemos advocates continuing to strengthen the political union of the 28 with a new constituent reform, provided that it is done on democratic principles, with the focus given to citizens and founded upon a social and value-based conception of Europe. We thus call for a transformative, ambitious, supportive, inclusive and profoundly pro-European project.

We completely identify with Victor Hugo's words: "A day will come when your arms will fall even from your hands! A day will come when war will seem as absurd and impossible between Paris and London, between Petersburg and Berlin, between Vienna and Turin (...) and you all, nations of the continent, will be merged closely within a superior unit and you will form the European brotherhood." What we do not identify with is a Europe of austerity, one that grows hand in hand with inequality, poverty, xenophobia and racism. This Europe is not for us, and we want to transform it.

5. European countries have drastically reduced their defence budgets as a consequence of the crisis. Against a backdrop of growing areas of tension and insecurity, NATO agreed at the end of 2014 to increase them gradually to the level of 2% of GDP, with a significant R&D&I component. Meanwhile gradual progress is being made towards common European defence. Do you share these goals? Which do you believe should be priorities?

Spain believes that it is necessary to share the financial burden, particularly after years of continuous cutbacks in a situation of crisis. The way it is shared out should take into account the economic situation of each country however, the sustainability of the commitments that are entered into and, in particular, each ally's real contributions to security.

The percentage of GDP spent on defence is not an accurate reflection of the real efforts that are expended. The important issue is not simply "how much we spend" but rather "how we do what we do" and our contribution to other international organisations, because transnational security transcends the framework of the Alliance (the EU, the UN or the 5+5 Defence initiative). Spain exports stability and contributes efficiently to global security.

We have shown our willingness to comply with legal commitments, slowing the declining trend of the defence budget in 2013 and slightly increasing it in 2014 and 2015.

Spain supports the progress made towards Common European Defence, and this accounts for the priority it has placed on its participation in EU Operations, where it is one of the largest contributors. We are present in all the theatres of operations of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and have recently led the mission in Mali.

As the party of government that we are, PSOE has generally supported the settlements reached by Spain at those organisations to which we belong. With reference to the specific question being asked, we have not opposed the proposal, on condition that the trend put forward by NATO is a gradual one. Moreover the investment policy in defence cannot be divorced from the economic situation and it should not under any circumstances be allowed to take budgetary allocations from such social issues as education, healthcare and social services. The priorities in defence should undoubtedly be those investments that enable our armed forces to operate appropriately in full conditions of security. In this context we have proposed, without receiving either an acceptance or a response from the government, the following:

- (a) Multi-year programming of investments in defence policy.
- (b) The reprogramming, renegotiation and review of the special armament plans.
- (c) The need to incentivise investment in R&D&I, especially in aspects related to new risks for national security. All this should be carried out from the perspective of a higher degree of interconnectedness and integration in the European defence industry.

Attaining this figure in a decade is unrealistic. It is necessary to take on commitments that are realistic and consistent with the capacities of each partner. Spain made commitments in the last decade which oblige its de facto participation in international operations. This means that our planning needs to comply with the operational criteria of the joint deployment. We believe in the Union's greater involvement in the defence arena and in greater collaboration with NATO. Europe should equip itself with a security architecture capable of responding to the challenges around us (terrorism, organised crime, cybersecurity, tax evasion and so on). This is not simply a question of capabilities but also a truly common policy and to this end greater political consensus is required. We can be complementary but we should aspire to be decisive in more areas of our security and defence. We advocate the creation of a European army. It is a great challenge because it is necessary to coordinate the strategy of the European defence industry with the political goals of the Union while ensuring that this wins the endorsement of citizens. In order to achieve this level of consensus we have to make further headway in sharing a security and defence culture consistent with our values and principles.

Podemos advocates a reform of the current international architecture of peace and security so that security and defence can predominantly focus on ensuring human rights and gender equality, democracy and sustainable development. This is why we advocate an understanding

of security threats that, as well as taking into account their symptoms, also considers the deep-rooted causes of these challenges.

We cannot permit the military response to be the only or indeed the main response to many of the international threats facing us today, particularly when we see that there is a structural inequality underlying many conflicts, with their roots in misery, exclusion and intolerance. This is why we advocate a reorientation of Spain's participation in regional architectures of peace and security such as those of NATO and the EU, to ensure that this integrated, multidimensional agenda does not only prioritise military or security solutions. The latter should prioritise above all the protection of civilians and the human rights of the population concerned (especially women and children), something that has not always happened in the past.

We therefore do not concur with many of the Spanish government's recent decisions, such as the purchase of combat drones or the integration of the Morón airbase into the US military's African Command.

The commitment to increase defence spending is currently unacceptable. With the exception of the US, only Greece, Poland and the United Kingdom maintain levels of military spending in accordance with this proposal. Spain faces a restrictive fiscal scenario in which increasing defence spending is not a priority.

We therefore believe that the integration of Europe's defence systems offers a unique opportunity to reduce spending while simultaneously optimizing the EU's defence capabilities. This integration should be accompanied by greater political autonomy for the EU with respect to the US, which is the country that continues to take the initiative in the security crisis.

In our opinion, the current interventionist security paradigm led by the US has produced and continues to produce disastrous results, as is evident from the cases of Libya, Iraq, Syria and Yemen. Moreover, NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe has fuelled the growing instability on the EU's eastern fringe by creating an understandable perception of threat in Russia. Europe should reach an understanding with Russia, despite all their differences and problems, taking the necessary steps to deal with them constructively. This confrontation, which is reminiscent of the worst of the Cold War, makes no sense either politically, culturally or economically; it runs counter to Europe's interests and the results have been disastrous. In general terms a profound reorientation of European regional policy is called for.

6. Do you favour maintaining, reducing or increasing Spain's participation in international missions?

Spain's involvement in international missions fundamentally comes about within the framework of decisions made in the Security Council of the United Nations or by virtue of its membership of NATO or the EU. This is in addition to the decisions made in the Spanish national parliament.

Spain is a country in earnest, one that contributes to international security. This is why we have taken part and shall continue to take part in missions as and when needs arise. Of course if necessary we are disposed towards increasing our participation. This is good for Spain and for our armed forces.

During this parliament PSOE has endorsed all the requests for Spanish troops to take part in foreign missions that the government has put before the Congress of Deputies. Such support is consistent with PSOE's stance on this issue, both in government and in opposition, namely to back Spain's supportive and committed role on the international stage and within the organisations of which we are members, as a dependable partner prepared to accept its responsibilities in humanitarian tasks, in the maintenance of peace, in the resolution of conflicts and in ensuring security. It is not simply a question of numbers but rather a question of commitment as a State to participating, within our operational and budgetary capacities, in the most effective and efficient manner possible in the fulfilment of the missions and responsibilities that such a framework requires of us, always seeking the highest degree of multilaterality possible and with full respect for international legality and United Nations resolutions. Our participation in missions should be in keeping with our operational capacities and the seriousness of the threat we are facing. The greater these two factors become the greater will be our participation.

Spain's participation should be: subject to compliance with an international mandate, approved by the Congress, in representation of citizens, who should not be excluded from the pertinent debates, and should meet our capacities and interests. It will thus depend on the case and the circumstances. Our focus is on loyalty to our partners and honouring our commitments. We have made mistakes, such as going into Iraq and Spain's withdrawal from Kosovo without any form of coordination, which should not be repeated.

We advocate that Spain maintains a committed and active profile at an international level, on the strict condition that the international missions in which it participates clearly adhere to international conventions and the mandate of the UN and it never acts unilaterally or with other countries or alliances.

Apart from the issue of international legality, we want such international missions to focus not only military and security aspects, but that they also focus on the protection of civilians and the “3 Ds” agenda, enabling the causes of conflicts (including the international ones: natural resources, the arms trade, etc.) to be addressed; and that they be designed and led by the society in conflict, in such a way that they meet the demands of democratic legitimacy and the participation of civil society, especially women, in accordance with Resolution 1325. Similarly these missions should enjoy the democratic mandate of the electorate, to which end we would organise binding electoral consultations regarding the participation of Spanish armed forces in major international military operations.

7. The Congress of Deputies has recently authorised the permanent use of the Morón airbase by the US for missions in Africa, subject to the restrictions established by bilateral agreements. What do you think about this decision?

Spain and the US are allies and relate to each other as such. We share interests and face challenges together. The Third Amending Protocol of the 1988 Convention on Defence Cooperation reflects this goal and represents a substantial strengthening of bilateral relations in the defence arena. It was ratified with the assent of the main political forces in Spain, as also happened with the Second Protocol in 2012. Spain maintains its full and exclusive sovereignty over the Morón Airbase and the prospective increase in US deployment will in any event require consultations at the highest level between the two governments through their respective Ministries of Defence.

Threats evolve and we should adapt in an effort to stay ahead. We have modified the 1988 Convention three times, but over the medium term we should negotiate a new Convention, one that includes the amendments of recent years and any more that may arise and that meets the challenges of the 21st century.

As I have said, PSOE views Spain, and the party has already demonstrated this in government, as a player on the international stage that is dependable, responsible and supportive in world governance. It is also a loyal partner to its allies. PSOE voted to approve the Third Amending Protocol of the Convention of Defence Cooperation between the Kingdom of Spain and the US, dated 1 December 1988, and the Amendments signed in Washington on 17 June 2015, negotiated by the government and submitted to the parliament for ratification. We view the existence of this and the Rota base as a guarantee of our security and as an opportunity to maintain closer ties with our allies. Everybody knows that one of the greatest threats to Spain's security comes from Daesh and the destabilisation of the Maghreb and the Sahel that both this movement and al-Qaeda are capable of causing. We therefore deem any demonstration of commitment to our allies concerning the security of Europe's southern flank as fundamental. We believe however that the government has missed a wonderful opportunity to broaden our relations with the US during the negotiations to aspects such as the world of business and culture. We also believe that the negotiations have been surrounded by a degree of secrecy out of keeping with what state policy in a democratic country ought to be.

Owing to its importance at the strategic level and for our national security the measure merited a more informed debate and greater political consensus than there was in the end. The decision was taken just a few months before the forthcoming elections in a procedure that was rushed through and accompanied by negotiations where none of the reasons supporting the decision have emerged. Hearing the spokesperson of the prime minister's office defending the agreement in terms of the number of jobs the base will generate is, as well as simplistic, an affront to the intelligence of our citizens.

Podemos seeks to revise the defence agreement with the US and its Third Amendment Protocol of 2015, which gives the American rapid action force in Africa a permanent presence at the Morón airbase, based on the conviction that the existence of American bases in Spain and the opaque negotiations surrounding this type of agreement jeopardise our sovereignty.

We also believe that the type of response that the American AFRICOM is giving to problems in Africa such as Boko Haram attacks the symptoms (the increasing expansion of this armed group in Nigeria, for example) but not the deep-seated causes of the conflicts. Spain's contribution to security and stability in Africa should involve encouraging responses that do not reinforce military mentalities but rather mechanisms of participatory governance, the fight against corruption and respect for the "3 Ds" (human rights and gender equality, democracy and sustainable and equitable development), among others.

8. The EU has made progress in recent years in signing free trade agreements. Following Central America and the nations of the Andean Community, agreements have been signed with, among others, South Korea and Canada, while talks are ongoing with Mercosur, India and the US. In the case of the latter, what requirements should the TTIP being negotiated between the EU and the US fulfil?

This government is a stalwart defender of free trade. Furthermore, the future will inevitably involve more integration, not more frontiers. Some may drag their feet, but it is a process that is already underway.

The signing of a broad agreement on trade and investments between the EU and the US, which may merit the term “partnership”, is an aspiration of singular importance in the process of turning the EU into a player of global scope. Little wonder that its signing has been singled out as one of the 10 priorities of the current European Commission headed by Jean-Claude Juncker. An authentic “great leap forward” would consist of signing an ambitious agreement that goes beyond the conventional terms of trade agreements, and that would serve as a means of laying down the standards of the international trade in goods and services both in multilateral and in bilateral spheres, and would set an example for other processes of trade and economic integration in other parts of the world.

All this needs to be accompanied by the appropriate guarantees and transparency, thereby easing the concerns of those who perceive a threat to European social and legal models in the negotiation of certain parts of the agreement. Under no circumstances should the TTIP be synonymous with Europeans giving things up, but rather an opportunity to construct an arena for exchange and enrichment involving the two regions with the greatest commercial trade in the world, both quantitatively (as the world's largest trade zone) and qualitatively (as a platform for establishing standards and principles of regulation at a worldwide level).

The TTIP is a project of enormous economic importance, because it would create the largest free trade area in the world. But above all this agreement has an enormous geopolitical importance. What is at stake is the economic and social model that we advocate and

Europe's position at the international negotiating table. Under no circumstances therefore would we accept an agreement with the US that incurred harm to the interests of European citizens. Nor would we accept a single retrograde step in European environmental, social or labour protection standards, or the liberalisation of essential public services such as healthcare, education and water supply. The high level of protection that we enjoy in Europe is non-negotiable. We also ask that data be given the maximum level of protection and insist upon guaranteeing the protection of the EU's cultural diversity and audiovisual services. We also ask for a guarantee that the differences between investors and States should continue to be subjected to the regular processes established by legislation. Finally, we advocate the greatest possible transparency throughout the process and that the information available should be clear and sufficient to meet citizens' concerns.

The EU should endeavour to sign free trade agreements that have a positive impact on our competitiveness, productivity and job creation. Although there has been a great deal of speculation about the deregulatory risks of TTIP the truth is that the Commission is obliged by its competences to defend European interests, and hence data protection for example lies outside the agreement. Among the agreement's red lines is compliance with the rules of our internal market in defence of our citizens. The TTIP should however be seen as a historic opportunity to create a trade area capable of becoming, owing to its political and economic dimensions, not only an engine for global growth but also a way of disseminating the standards and rules by which western democracies operate.

As we have already stated on various occasions, we support a trade model that extends rather than undermines the wellbeing of the majority and environmental protection, that goes further in ensuring the enjoyment of the rights and liberties contained in such treaties as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights, inalienable concepts that must not be suppressed or suspended under any circumstances.

For these reasons we oppose the TTIP, because it is a threat to our sovereignty as a country, to democracy, with its secret conversations, riding roughshod over rights, to the concepts of an economy for all and the welfare state, and because the treaty views social and environmental regulations as obstacles to trade.

We therefore include in our manifesto commitments to: (a) not ratify the TTIP, TiSA and CETA trade deals, and to engage in dialogue with other European governments to encourage them to follow suit; (b)

review and terminate all Agreements of Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments (ARPPPI) containing secret mechanisms of private arbitration between investors and States; (c) encourage the creation of an international network of governments and multilateral institutions, such as UNCTAD and the ILO, a change in the trade and investment policies of the European Council and an effort to ensure that EU countries do not put pressure on third-party nations to sign new trade and investment treaties; and (d) conduct a study – with the participation of civil society – into the overall impact of the EU's Common Trade Policy on Spain and the world.

9. China is perceived by European countries as a vast market, but also as an aggressive competitor that competes with an advantage. What do you believe is the appropriate response to such competition? Are you in favour of protectionist measures?

Spain, at the heart of the EU, supports economic relations with China based on the concept of the level playing field, something that enables firms from both sides to compete in fair conditions and gives adequate protection to intellectual property and the rights of investors. The competition that certain European companies have traditionally suffered is related to different production conditions in China and Europe and the virtual non-existence on the European side of restrictions on industrial relocation, which has enabled some of our companies to exploit their relative advantages.

Since its entry into the EU, Spain has maintained a highly positive attitude towards developing free markets, so it does not advocate protectionism in its relations with China. Spain should possibly concentrate its efforts on identifying and lifting the restrictions that impede the entry of our products and press those responsible at the EU to continue combating the trade practices of Chinese companies that distort competition in the internal market and damage our companies.

China is the second largest economy and the largest exporter in the world. Trade between the EU and China today exceeds €1 billion per day. It is the EU's second most important trade partner, after the US, and our largest source of imports by a wide margin. Relations with China are undoubtedly one of the most important challenges facing

European trade policy. Since joining the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and agreeing to submit itself to the international norms to ensure a level playing field in trade, China has recorded high and sustained economic growth based on exports. It is true however that Chinese producers in a range of industries have been accused of failing to respect the competitive practices of international trade through such activities as dumping and benefiting from export subsidies and loans not permitted by the WTO rules. In these cases the provisions of the WTO state that, if it is shown that such a situation really exists, the countries affected can introduce perfectly regulated trade defence measures, limited in scope and well defined, that are essential to avoid imbalances and the effectiveness of which is amply proven. Such measures are not at all protectionist, but rather defensive. The EU has thus launched anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations against China in various industries, such as solar panels and photovoltaic cells, the technology sector, steelmaking, bicycles and paper, among others. I regard it as fundamental that EU governments and industry should work together to identify this kind of illegal practice and defend a position of fair growth based on competitiveness, social justice and equality of conditions with our competitors. Having said that, China's economy is modernising all the time and the Chinese government is carrying out extremely important reforms to try to adapt to the rules of world trade and enhance the social and working conditions of its labour force. I believe it is crucial that both the Spanish government and the European Commission study the impact that China's growing commercial influence will have over the medium term on industry and employment and, based on this, design an appropriate reindustrialisation strategy that should necessarily include greater investment in technology and R&D&I.

In our opinion the key to forestalling the risks of mistrust is cooperation and dialogue. To cite a recent example, Spain is a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. China's interdependence with the global economy means that it also has to accept its responsibility as a participant. We do not support protectionist measures other than in exceptional circumstances and they should always have the consensus support of our European partners.

10. Spain has a substantial energy deficit that reduces its autonomy and encumbers its balance of trade. What steps would you introduce over the medium and long term to reduce it and reverse the current situation?

Spain has traditionally been highly dependent on foreign sources for its energy needs. The only EU countries that have greater external dependency are Malta, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Ireland, Lithuania, Belgium, Italy and Portugal. However, factors such as the economic crisis, the trend for Spanish production to move towards activities requiring lower energy inputs and the greater representation of renewable energies in the energy mix have helped the degree of foreign dependency to fall from peaks in excess of 80% to around 70% in 2014.

Our energy policy, determined by our membership of the UN and the EU, commits us to the fight against climate change and the concomitant reduction in greenhouse gases. These commitments are closely linked to the construction of a true single energy market in the EU, which will enable these commitments in the fight against climate change to be addressed. For this to happen it is essential to make headway in developing the connecting electricity and gas infrastructure needed as a prerequisite for such a single market, which would also enable diversification in the sources of supply, thereby offsetting the influence of energy dependency in relations with third-party countries. Spain has persevered with these ideas and they have materialised both in the conclusions of the European Council of October 2014 and in the Summit on interconnections that we held with France, Portugal and the European Commission in March this year in Madrid, the outcome of which was the Declaration of Madrid of 4 March 2015, dealing with this issue.

We would like to create a wide-ranging debate and consensus regarding the route-map for transforming our energy model. We would like to set out within the framework of the energy and climate policies, abiding by the 2030 and 2050 time-frames, an energy policy that ensures that citizens have access to energy at affordable prices and transforms the energy sector into a driver of competitiveness and a wellspring of innovation, development and job creation, reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, fostering self-sufficiency, bolstering the security of supply and fighting effectively against climate change. The goal is energy for all without exceeding an annual limit of 1.7 tonnes of

CO2 per capita by 2050. It will be an increasingly decentralised system, with more small-scale distributed generation, mostly renewable, with a major development of energy services aimed at more efficient management of consumption. Technological innovation and the maturity and cost-reduction of renewable energies and especially photovoltaic energy, telecommunications and the automating of households ought to help us in this regard. But we socialists also set great store by the contribution that this new energy model can make to economic democratisation, that is to say strengthening the role of the public in the management of energy.

The first and most important is to improve our energy planning. It is absurd that our installed capacity exceeds demand twofold and yet our electricity bills are among the most expensive. Nor does it make sense to present a project in support of domestic coal, with greater CO2 emissions than gas, as an environmental incentive without taking into account the European legislation on state aid. Nor is it possible to have an efficient energy policy if the regulatory agencies continue to depend on political power. This “friends-in-the-right-places” type of capitalism is ultimately inefficient and costs citizens dear. With regard to the more structural problems, over the short term the only feasible solution involves increasing our volume of exchange with Europe, although this does not solve our internal shortfalls. Another solution involves incentivising personal consumption. The current incentives are insufficient to bring about change, either at the level of consumers or businesses. We also have to give investment in renewable energies stability and attain a reasonable balance in our energy mix. It is also important in this respect to make headway in the European talks with supplier nations. Europe continues to negotiate without a single voice, just as Spain has failed to be either credible or consistent in its foreign strategy. This encumbers our ability to negotiate. Energy is an issue that runs right through central government’s foreign policy since it connects our trade, cooperation and investment strategies. The decision to block the Mediterranean Solar Plan, an initiative that Spain should be jointly leading, was a significant error, as it is to be a founder-member of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and then wash one’s hands of the organisation. We should aspire to having a credibility founded on our own model of internal organisation and link it to a foreign strategy that is predictable and consistent, negotiated with the main stakeholders (businesses, consumers, technical experts and so on).

Podemos proposes a National Energy Transition Plan involving a public-private investment in energy efficiency and green energies equivalent to 1.5% of annual GDP over a period of 20 years. It would involve transforming the productive apparatus, the real estate model

and the transportation system in order to move towards a low-carbon economy characterised by the use of renewable energy sources. The implementation of this plan would enable a 30% reduction in the domestic consumption of primary energy compared to a situation in which none of the steps we propose are taken, while a good deal of the remaining consumption would be covered domestically using renewable energies at the end-point of their application, thereby reducing energy dependency.

This plan would be accompanied by the stimulus and development of “green infrastructure” (collective transport networks, rail transport, efficiency in the use of water, reforestation, etc.), by R&D&I plans specifically designed for the development of “green technologies” and, in particular, by technological developments aimed at providing new forms of energy storage, new energy vectors and new forms of modulating the electricity generated, such as hydrogen and thermoelectric solar technology, which enable the exploitation of renewable energies in the electricity network to be optimised.

Podemos will encourage all entities in the public sector to move towards 100% renewable energy purchases through an electricity supplier offering just such a service.

11. The resources Spain devotes to Official Development Assistance (ODA) have more than halved during the crisis. What steps would you take to return to previous levels and move towards the target of 0.7% of GDP? Would you be in favour of enshrining this target in legislation, as the United Kingdom has done?

The fall in development assistance had already begun in the previous government and continued with the present one, owing to the budgetary restrictions. Once the economic crisis has been overcome the intention of my government is to devote more resources to development aid, which comprises a key element of our foreign policy.

In this parliament, following the guidelines of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee, we have instituted a rationalisation of development aid to make it more efficient. We have focused on a geographical and thematic structure. Clearly the quantity of resources

earmarked is important, but so is the quality of our development aid. Our investment in aid needs to have a real impact on improving the lives of many people.

Would I advocate enshrining this aim in legislation, as the United Kingdom has done? It's an issue that needs looking at. What I am clearly in favour of is increasing the development aid budget. More realistic perhaps is a political goal that is modified in accordance with circumstances. My experience as the leader of the government is that well-managed development aid is an investment not only in the peace, prosperity, stability and wellbeing of the recipient countries but also in the peace, prosperity, stability and wellbeing of Spaniards.

Socialist governments have made a concerted effort to devise a coherent aid policy in line with the international development agenda. It is necessary to re-establish a relevant role in the international context, precisely when the new post-2015 development agenda has just been approved. Spain should reaffirm its comprehensive commitment to sustainable development and the fight against poverty and inequality as hallmarks of our foreign policy. This involves an increase in resources and a new approach in our foreign policy. We will try to attain the 0.7% of GDP funding goal for ODA over the medium term, because we continue to view it as an ethical and political commitment and a milestone in the history of international solidarity. Our aspiration is therefore to double Spanish ODA over the next parliament. The idea of enshrining the 0.7% figure in legislation is desirable provided it acquires sufficient consensus.

Spain considerably increased its ODA in the period prior to the crisis. However it lacked both the administrative capacity and the planning to manage such an increase. We are convinced that the management of public funds has to be much more rigorous and handled with greater transparency and accountability. During the crisis the budget has been cut by almost 70%, virtually dismantling the aforementioned policy and demoting us to the bottom of the European ranking. Volatility of this sort cannot persist in something that we regard as important to our foreign deployment. We have to invest more but in things that have a real impact on global public assets and in dividends for our citizens. The target of 0.7% was established in 1980 and only five countries have achieved it (Denmark, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Sweden and Norway). The OECD average is 0.3% and Spain's figure is somewhat below 0.2%, of which a significant part goes on trade-linked loans. Although enshrining it in legislation would send a clear sign of political commitment, I believe that it could also be an empty gesture. We should carry out a serious assessment of what type of ODA Spain can offer, how to improve its transparency and planning,

and how to integrate it into our foreign policy. We also have to adjust to the new global setting, with emerging countries featuring among the donor group, greater private involvement and greater balance between the interests of the donor countries and the recipient countries. Spain is disposed to show solidarity and this forms part of our reputation as a country. We have to appreciate its true value and coordinate our activities better so that the aid can have an impact on development.

ODA forms a substantial part of a broader framework for the public financing of development. Podemos believes that clear and concrete ODA undertakings are fundamental (founded on the principles of sufficiency, transparency, predictability and separation from interests other than those of development) so as to attain within at most two parliaments a level of 0.7% of Gross Domestic Product devoted to ODA. This figure will be enshrined in an Act which will replace the current Cooperation Act. The Act will be the tangible outcome of drawing up a new Citizens' Pact for Global Justice that, as well as the ODA commitments, will include reforms and concrete steps to underpin consistency throughout the government's programme on human rights, gender equality and sustainable and equitable global development.

To strengthen our commitment to assistance, our manifesto includes a proposal to create a new Ministry of Equality and Solidarity, which will be charged with implementing the international cooperation and solidarity policy, accompanied by a high level of interministerial dialogue; it will also be responsible for planning, managing and implementing all the activities that currently come under the heading of International Cooperation for Development (solidarity and cooperation policy, humanitarian aid, education for the global citizenry, research for global justice and sustainable development), including the management of its financial instruments, whether repayable or otherwise, and the global economic justice programme. The Ministry will also be in charge of ensuring the consistency of development policies.

12 A considerable number of the countries around us have developed “nation-branding strategies”. Do you consider the *Marca España* initiative appropriate? Do you think it needs to be modified and, if so, in what direction?

Marca España is a strategic initiative that has met with success, as evidenced by the positive results garnered from its two key objectives: the improvement of Spain’s image as a country and the recovery of self-esteem amongst Spaniards. Both indicators have clearly improved in the last year. The best way to improve the perception of Spain is to be a serious and reliable country, in other words to have credibility. This is what this government has shown and will continue to show.

As a reforming government we are prepared to take steps to improve any initiative. *Marca España* – which, as I say, has been successful – needs to be dynamic and constantly renewing itself. It should delve deeper in its efforts to analyse and monitor the image of the country domestically and abroad, reinforce its role as coordinator of public and private initiatives in this area and fine-tune its communications strategy. All this in order to attain its goal: to improve the perception of Spain.

The government of the Popular Party (PP) has been more concerned about Spain as a brand than Spain as a country. It has prioritised the superficial, an obsession with images, on packaging, on “*Marca España*”. And while we can agree that promoting and championing business activities abroad is necessary, the economy should not be driven obsessively and exclusively by foreign policy. Private interests should never be confounded with the general interest. As I pointed out earlier, I would like Spain to revert to being a leader in defending human rights and the fight against poverty and to be known and recognised for our social and welfare model. “*Marca España*” can find its place in business promotion and advocacy but it cannot form the central core of our foreign policy. Spain deserves higher goals. Our partners in the world expect Spain to play a more active part in global governance. “*Marca España*” should not serve as a mere instrument of international prestige; it should have real content that serves to provide added value to our presence abroad.

I believe that all strategies aimed at positioning a country’s image with marketing tools have potential as long as they are conducted rigorously and inclusively. If they are partial or superficial they can

backfire by virtue of being simplistic or frivolous. Moreover it is extremely important that such a strategy should not stick out like a sore thumb in a country's foreign policy or be a propaganda exercise trumpeting the successes of the government in question, but rather that it fits coherently into other initiatives in a way that cuts across a broad spectrum. It needs to be a public rather than a governmental strategy. The impact of the activities needs to be measured and the design of the strategy modified to enhance its effectiveness. Nation-branding is liable to lack plausibility if the model of the country that exports our politics is one of corruption, mismanagement and indifference to the international scene. C's advocates that the initiative should be subjected to assessment and auditing so that it can become an effective component of our foreign policy strategy.

The current structure of Marca España does not reflect either the diversity of Spain or the interests of its citizens or the majority of our businesses and institutions. It is a top-down project that basically benefits a relatively small number of companies without taking into account the reality, interests and wishes of the vast majority of the population. The project should be given a thorough overhaul, including its name, in order to build a distinct nation-strategy in which all, not just a few, perceive themselves represented and advocated. We should reflect upon and take advantage of our diversity, which is a source of our wealth and our strength. The 15-M anti-austerity movement was the best way of nation-branding our country, and this is the approach we will take.

13. And on the subject of strategies, the current parliament has also approved a Foreign Action and Service of the State Act, both documents being strategic for Foreign Action and Security, without a significant degree of consensus being attained. Do you think these instruments are necessary? What do you think their future should be in the next parliament?

In this parliament a significant effort has been made to modernise the legal framework of our foreign policy and provide it with instruments that enable its planning and oversight to be improved. The Foreign Action and Service Act, the Treaties Act and the Immunities Act have all been passed. The government has also introduced new regulations for the diplomatic profession.

In the field of security it is worth emphasising the setting up of the National Security Council – chaired by the leader of the government – enacted by a law that had the support of the main opposition party. The government has approved the Foreign Action Strategy and the National Security Strategy, as well as the three sector strategies that rely on the latter: maritime security, cyber security and energy security, all of which have a significant foreign dimension.

In addition, parliamentary control is bolstered by the annual appearance of the secretary of the aforementioned Council before the Congress of Deputies to present his annual report.

The Foreign Action and Service Act significantly improves the legal and conceptual framework of our foreign activities: (a) it systematises strategic planning and the monitoring of its implementation; (b) it institutionalises the process of coordination and consultation via the Foreign Policy Council; (c) it strengthens parliamentary control of our foreign policy; and (4) it establishes mechanisms to rationalise foreign deployment.

Meanwhile the Foreign Action Strategy arose from the realisation that a reassessment of priorities, goals and activities was needed, and it was drawn up following a wide-ranging consultation process at both the institutional and civil society levels. The result is a document that satisfies the aspirations of the vast majority of Spanish society and in the future will adapt to the changes and circumstances that arise in the international context by incorporating the modifications put forward in the Annual Foreign Action Report.

It strikes me as good practice that as a country we are able to draw up and agree strategic documents both in the arena of foreign policy and in that of national security, two areas that form part of what we call policies of State. They are useful tools, especially if they are constructed with rigour and precision, if they have substance and set out priorities, goals and means and, crucially, if they are the fruit of dialogue and agreement with the other political forces and the other economic and social stakeholders involved. I would like to point out that this was the case with the Spanish Security Strategy, agreed both in 2011 under the socialist government and in 2013 under the Popular Party government. We have been critical of the Foreign Action Strategy put forward by the present government however, both in terms of the content and the form of the document. The same is true of the Foreign Action Act, which has been pushed through with scarcely any dialogue or consensus; we have therefore put forward the need to draw up a new reform of the foreign service, one that enjoys consensus and aspires to permanence, based on agreed strategic goals reflecting what Spain is today and depicting the type of country to which we aspire.

The very fact that this review exercise has been carried out is positive. Even if it is only at a symbolic level, recognising our own shortcomings puts us on the path towards a solution. It is very important that we start to incorporate planning and evaluation into our foreign policy. It was incomprehensible that it had not been formulated before in our democracy. The government squandered the opportunity to reach a wider consensus however and the documents that have emerged are devoid of political ambition and strategic thinking. They are not what they claim to be. Rather it has been an extremely self-satisfied exercise that befits the low profile foreign policy has had in recent years. Nor are the contents consistent with the actions of our government, being overly focused on economic issues and sidelining such essential components as the internationalisation of research, the promotion of democracy and human rights. If the government does not abide by its own strategy it is senseless to produce it. The Foreign Action Act does not deal with the fundamental problem: the politicisation of the instruments of State. In our programme we propose going much further in this direction, improving transparency, incorporating meritocracy and depoliticising the administration. Spain needs a foreign policy that adapts to new challenges and is capable of analysing, planning and evaluating its activities. The government should act with a greater sense of institutional responsibility and not take decisions in a way that excludes citizens.

Having a good Foreign Action and Service of the State Act is always positive. Having a bad project, such as that approved by the People's Party (PP), is harmful. It is a law that serves the interests and ideology of the PP, which however respectable they may be, have little or nothing to do with the needs and interests of Spaniards as a whole. It is curious how those who talk most about the need for consensus in foreign policy fail to put it into practice in government. Both the law and the strategy document must be modified as a matter of urgency.

14. With its 500 million speakers Spanish is the world's second language, and the third most used on the internet. How do you think Spain should tap into the popularity of Spanish language and culture?

Spanish – our language and our culture – is undoubtedly a wonderful resource for reinforcing our country's image. We are a great linguistic power. Language is key to Spain's foreign policy. Spanish is an

appreciating asset and our challenge is to ensure that it achieves its potential, as a language and as culture.

Spanish is spoken in more than 20 countries in the world by more than 500 million people. Its weight and influence in countries where it is not the official language, such as the US, is undeniable.

But we Spaniards account for less than 10% of all Spanish speakers. The best policy involves forming alliances with the rest of the Spanish-speaking nations.

60% of the Cervantes Institute's cultural programming is organised with Hispano-American countries and the Institute's "Ibero-Americanisation" plan is being implemented with a very clear goal: to ensure that Spanish is one of the three major languages of the 21st century, along with English and Chinese.

The Spanish language is one of the things that most promotes us in the world as a country. The vibrancy of Spanish culture is among the greatest in the world and above all among the most appreciated in other countries. Constructing a strategy with Latin America to strengthen and extend Spanish and our culture in the world is a fundamental goal. Especially important in this regard is the US, where Spanish is undergoing expansion throughout the population, both Latino and otherwise.

Simply taking our foreign policy seriously will achieve a great deal. We have a cultural capital that is the envy of many nations. But our actions sometimes undervalue it. Three years ago the directors of the Cervantes Institutes in Curitiba and Recife (both in Brazil) learned about the closure of their two institutions in the newspapers. Incidents such as these cast a shadow on Marca España and the trumpeting of the language as a priority. I believe that the activities of the Cervantes Institute have been positive and should operate as a platform for promoting the language, but it is also necessary to do much more on other more specific issues, such as cultural research, mobility, the promotion of the cultural industries, support for SMEs and entrepreneurs and the use of the language in international bodies. No serious study has been conducted for example into the Latin American media and how to adjust our strategy to such outlets. A more ambitious plan is needed that recognises such potential for its true worth, with specific initiatives that create a long-term impact.

Beyond the historic anniversaries commemorating the past, which is how we have often addressed our relations with the world's 500 million Spanish-speakers, Podemos would like to promote interaction

between people who up to now have not benefited from foreign policy and promotion: the vitality of our organised civil society, the associative movement and cultural output of our citizens, the movements in defence of human rights – such as the anti-eviction initiatives and the “citizen multitudes” – these are examples of “Marca España” that should also be promoted by the institutions. In this respect a universe of creation awaits us, and we want to ensure that it is organised civil society, the creators and the artists that are given appropriate spaces for such an important undertaking.

We also believe that the Cervantes Institutes should operate not only as a network of Spanish language teaching centres but should also strengthen their Latin American dimension, organising joint programmes and promoting a language and cultural activities (but also scientific and educational exchanges) that are not solely linked to Spain, but to the vast wealth of lifestyles and cultures that surround the language.

Given the size of the Hispanic community in the US (55 million people, representing 17% of the population), we have included in our programme the development of a “United Plan”, an initiative that sets out to establish better political, economic and social links with this group, as well as the English-speaking population of the US with an interest in Spain. There is enormous potential for development surrounding the language.

15. How do you assess current Ibero-American relations? How do you think they could be renewed and strengthened?

Our relations with the region are excellent. Since coming to power I have focused special attention on Latin America, trying to develop a peer-to-peer, more balanced relationship. Spain supports the various regional integration processes, among others, CELAC, UNASUR, the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur. All of these can make contributions to improving the lives of citizens, which is our ultimate goal. It is necessary to continue working on reforming the Ibero-American Community, enriching it and strengthening its relations with the EU, an issue in which Spain, like Portugal, is especially interested.

In the political arena we should continue strengthening our capacity for dialogue with the entire region and bolstering bilateral relations in accordance with the circumstances and specific situations of each country.

In the commercial realm it is necessary to increase trade, which still falls short of its potential, encouraging the signing of free trade agreements with the EU and the updating of those that already exist. Likewise the significant degree of Spanish investment – which tends very clearly towards permanence – needs to be fostered and the most important thing for this is legal security. We should also seek out ways of attracting Latin American investment to Spain, in other words creating a two-way street.

Development assistance has to evolve in accordance with needs of countries that are mostly middle income and need help in their processes of institutional modernisation, technological innovation and knowledge transfer. None of this is to overlook the more traditional destinations for development assistance.

I would like emphasise the importance we place on the Pacific Alliance. Spain was the first European country to become an Observer State, showing a leadership that was later followed by many other countries. The Pacific Alliance embodies values that we share, such as free trade. This freedom needs to be joined an improvement in the movement of people, and this is why Spain sponsored and secured, after an intensive campaign in the EU, an exemption from the Schengen visa requirement for Peruvian and Colombian citizens.

Latin America is indispensable for Spain in all arenas. We form a community of values and interests with the Latin American countries that contributes to our development and provides us with added value in our global presence. In recent years the region has gone through considerable economic and social development, with its civil society playing an increasing role. The various cooperation and integration initiatives that are unfolding in the region represent an opportunity to move the entire region forward on the world stage. Latin America feels more secure with itself. It has the capacity and the will to address its own challenges in a coordinated way, with the emphasis on dialogue and concerted action. And it also has the capacity and the will to participate in international affairs.

I get the impression that over the course of this parliament Spain's influence in Latin America has been waning however. Despite the fact that ours has been one of the few developed countries, possibly the only one, to have designed and implemented a comprehensive policy towards the region, I get the sensation that we have missed an opportunity. We socialists wish to redouble the efforts expended on Ibero-American relations as a strategic axis. And we want to do it by restoring the centrality of the policy via a renewed relationship based on respect, recognition and symmetry; a relationship based

on collaboration and concerted action, and on shared effort. It is fundamental to maintain direct dialogue and construct well-founded, fluid and permanent communication with each and every one of the Ibero-American governments; this will enable us to tackle, for example, issues touching on the promotion of rights and freedoms and the protection of human rights in the region. Dialogue is not necessarily synonymous with agreement. But such dialogue and a well-founded framework of political relations are undoubtedly what will enable us to overcome our differences, construct commitments, drive economic and commercial relations and obtain concrete results. The Ibero-American Community of Nations is another resource that we should support and strengthen as a means of paving the way to exchanges and relations between our civil societies that go beyond political relations.

Relations are going through a period characterised by a degree of imprecision and a lack of goals for the future. This is due to the political fragmentation of the region and also Spain's loss of influence on the international stage. Headway should be made on joint projects agreed between equals that better reflect the needs and interests of the countries in the region. There are many areas where relations can be deepened (education, technology, research), but this should not be done with a "business as usual" mentality but rather new tools for cooperation that are more flexible, less bureaucratic and better adapted to the realities.

Podemos advocates renewed relations on a "peer-to-peer" basis with Latin America, avoiding the condescension that Spain has been accustomed to exercising over the region hitherto. Podemos seeks to strengthen relations with the new regional entities (CELAC, UNASUR, etc.) and push the UE to extend its relations with these organisations with the aim of fostering inclusive and sustainable economic and social development.

In the current economic context we want to support inter-migration so as to meet the needs of both regions. Protecting the rights of Spanish emigrants to Latin America and Latin Americans in Spain should be a governmental priority.

We want to put Spain at the disposal of the region's countries as a mediator and in this guise be involved and contribute to the agreements stemming from the peace talks in Colombia. We also undertake to promote respect for human rights and gender equality in the region, supporting for example the popular campaigns against immunity and corruption that are currently underway in Central America. Finally we will support the progressive normalisation of political and commercial relations with Cuba at the bilateral and multilateral levels, including

the immediate abandonment of the EU's common stance of 1996. Spain should reach out in an amicable and sincere way towards Latin America.

16. The conflict arising after Russia's intervention in Ukraine and the annexation of the Crimea has shattered hopes of counting on Russia as a partner in the security, stability and prosperity of Europe. How do you think confidence can be restored and this goal re-established?

Spain is a country of principles and fully respects International Law. We defend the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and this is why we have condemned the illegal annexation of the Crimea and denounced the destabilisation in eastern Ukraine. It is essential that the EU maintains its unity, which is an asset in its own right. At the end of October the situation is much improved compared to some months ago, although it is necessary to continue making efforts to advance towards a political solution.

Russia is a large country however, a very important neighbour for the EU and a player of the first rank on the world's stage, one that we need to have on board in order to address our challenges. It is necessary to recover the strategic vision, over the long term, in our relations. To this end we should, among other things: (a) maintain dialogue at the highest level with the Russian authorities; (b) without forfeiting our principles, be sensitive to their proposals; and (c) create a positive agenda that includes trade aspects and the bolstering of contacts between citizens and with civil society.

Ever since the conflict erupted we have advocated keeping channels of communication with Russia open, because the solution has to be political and must come on the basis of dialogue. International law and the territorial integrity of Ukraine must be respected however. We need to replace the logic of confrontation with that of cooperation. Russia is an indispensable participant in resolving several key international issues, such as Syria, Iran, the Middle East peace process and the fight against terrorism, and also in such matters as energy. We are obliged to come to an understanding.

A goal of security, stability and prosperity with Russia obliges us to bear in mind that the Russian political regime is very different from Europe's as is its manner of viewing international relations. This means that once incentives to cooperate on an equal footing have been lost, the EU needs to adopt different tactics. The EU has little ability to influence the Russian regime in domestic issues, but it can shape Russia's foreign policy through its situation of economic and security interdependence. Europe also has the potential to become Russia's preferred partner on such issues as the modernisation of its infrastructure, improving competitiveness and technological development. In the short term, Russia should understand that Europe's stance on the Ukraine and the annexation of the Crimea will not waver, but if the Minsk commitments are fulfilled there are opportunities to put relations back on track. The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) presented an ambitious proposal to the European Parliament for a security conference that contemplates a new European architecture similar to that constructed during the Cold War, a sort of Helsinki mark II that would lay the foundations for closer collaboration and define the institutional limits. It is not good for Europe that Russia acts with free rein in Syria. I believe that we should make progress towards cooperation scenarios with Russia over the long term, provided that there is a significant change in the current situation in its zone of influence. Another step in this direction would consist of starting a conversation at the level of trade that would diffuse political mistrust between the EU and the Eurasian Union.

The EU and Russia are going through a crisis without precedent since the ending of the Cold War. The causes of this conflict are not accidental but rather structural, and a product of the competitive rather than cooperative focus of the foreign deployment of the EU and Russia. Cooperation between Russia, the EU and the US on other fronts – such as the fight against terrorism and piracy, the situation in Afghanistan and participation in the agreement with Iran – suggests that we are a long way from a new Cold War, but the situation in Ukraine has repercussions for Syria, Yemen, Sudan and many other countries where Russia, the EU and the US have fundamental differences that have only been aggravated since the crisis broke out.

What Podemos proposes in order to reverse this process is, first, to defuse the build-up of tension in Ukraine on the basis of the Minsk-II ceasefire, accepted by both parties in February 2015. We believe that for this solution to endure we need to reintegrate Russia into the forums from which it has been excluded since 2013 (the G-8 and the NATO-Russia Council) and put an end to the regime of economic sanctions. In return, Moscow should commit to respecting the ceasefire in the east of Ukraine, cease its provocations in Eastern Europe and lift the

parallel trade restrictions placed on the EU. A permanent forum of comprehensive dialogue should be set up for the EU member states, Russia and the region's other countries, such as Ukraine, to participate on an equal footing.

17. The “Arab Spring” has become a backdrop to conflict in some cases and threats to the stability and security of southern Mediterranean countries in others. Against this backdrop, what should Spain’s goals be?

The goals can be reduced to one: stability. Underpinning stability are the existence of minimum levels of security (we all have to take on commitments here), respect for human rights and the fight against poverty. It is a permanent and long-term task. On the basis of these foundations it is essential to contribute to improving institutions and fostering economic development. Spain has a special sensitivity and responsibility. We are aware of the challenges and threats we face, but also of the opportunities that present themselves. The best policy towards neighbours is one that enables your neighbours to enjoy stability. Their stability is ours.

We should intensify the economic integration of the Mediterranean region with the EU, something that would also undoubtedly have repercussions for the creation of a regional south-south cooperation zone.

I would like to emphasise the importance of Barcelona as the Spanish capital of the Mediterranean. Its role in this context has been strengthened in the current parliament, as evidenced by the holding of the inaugural Economic Forum of the Western Mediterranean: 5+5 Dialogue (in October 2013) and the Ministerial Conference on the Southern Neighbourhood last April.

I would like to highlight two shared challenges that we have to address together: the fight against jihadism, which respects neither frontiers nor religions, and the orderly management of migratory flows in order to tackle a heartrending drama that is creating thousands of victims.

The Mediterranean is the sea that has the two most unequal shores in the world. Poverty, unemployment and lack of opportunities on the southern shore stoke the flames of violence, radicalisation and instability. The emergence of Daesh and jihadist violence represent

a grave threat, not only to the lives of human beings but also to our values and liberties. This is why we need to devise a truly far-reaching political strategy that tackles terrorism from the perspective of security and police and intelligence community cooperation, but also that champions and defends rights and freedoms, respect and tolerance, as well as the "Alliance of Civilisations" initiative. I believe that the time has come to push for a renewed focus, a new agenda for cooperation in the Mediterranean, based on the shared responsibility of all parties. It is a matter of giving European-Mediterranean relations a new, multilateral dimension, based on wide-ranging cooperation and solidarity, in which both shores participate on an equal footing, to devise an overarching Mediterranean initiative that reclaims and gives new life to the spirit of the Barcelona Process.

We have to construct a unified and decisive response at a European level in pursuit of stabilisation in the first instance and the consolidation of the more encouraging political processes, such as the case of Tunisia. Trade and aid policies are not enough. We have to strengthen the political-institutional mechanisms: in some cases through civil societies, in others through close cooperation with the new governments. What Spain should not forget is that the southern Mediterranean frontier is a priority for the whole of Europe. There is a great deal at stake and the EU should set aside its self-absorption and act. We cannot allow the Mediterranean to become an unbridgeable gulf for human rights or geopolitical fault-line for our security. Europe must avoid becoming either an island of rights for economic migrants or an impregnable fortress for refugees. To this end a common foreign and immigration policy is essential together with a stable political strategy that makes use of all our tools (trade, political dialogue, investment, mobility and culture). We have to become a dependable player that transmits solidarity, security and stability to its neighbours because this determines our relevance at a global level.

Foreign policy in the Middle East should be based on respect and promotion of human rights, gender equality and religious and ethnic plurality, accountability, choosing sides in those situations where such rights are jeopardised and support for democratic processes and the empowerment of citizens when this emerges from their own societies.

The current wave of protests in the Middle East and North Africa is the consequence of, among other longstanding factors, the weak and contradictory stance of Europe, which, instead of supporting the demands for democratic reform arising in 2011, allowed counter-revolutionary and repressive forces to impose themselves in the region.

The extremism that is spreading across the region, which threatens the populations of these countries and extends beyond them, is the consequence of having allowed impunity to reign through the repression meted out by governments like that of Assad in Syria, which have in turn triggered the more fundamentalist and totalitarian proposals, such as those of the self-styled Islamic State.

18. Morocco, by virtue of being a neighbour and for all manner of other reasons – migratory, economic and security reasons among them – is a very important country for Spain. What measures would you propose to strengthen relations?

First I should underscore that bilateral relations are excellent and I think everyone recognises this. Cooperation between the two countries on multiple fronts has generated a level of confidence that enables a multiplicity of things to be constructed and the inevitable differences that arise between neighbours to be addressed in an atmosphere of calm. In this parliament we have re-established the High-Level Meetings and there is a constant flow of exchanges and visits that we will continue into the next term.

Cooperation on domestic issues – the fight against illegal immigration, drug trafficking and terrorism – is exemplary. Investment and commercial relations are excellent. My intention is for Morocco to remain our main customer outside the EU in the years ahead, after the US, and for Spain, with more than 17,000 exporting companies, to be Morocco's main trading partner.

The strengthening of bilateral relations with Morocco should be accompanied – as it has been over the last four years – by a push to improve our relations with Algeria. This government has demonstrated that it is possible to have good relations with our two major neighbours in the Maghreb at the same time. It is also our desire that relations between them improve.

Morocco is indeed a priority partner for Spain. In fact the two countries have a strategic association that has acquired increasing depth in recent years, enabling a constant strengthening of sectorial relations, with concrete and tangible results in the spheres of security, economic relations and migration, among others. This has been possible thanks to a shared determination first to restore complete confidence between the two governments, and second to foster a stable framework for

cooperation and neighbourly relations. It is my intention to proceed further along this path of bolstering political relations, dialogue and consensus. It is precisely this climate of respect and trust that enables us to raise with Morocco the issue of the Western Sahara for example, which, as you know, is a sensitive matter for public opinion on both sides. For Spain it is a question of improving the prospects for the process of negotiations to contribute to a fair, lasting and mutually accepted political solution that respects the Saharawi people's right to self-determination within the framework erected by the United Nations.

Morocco is a strategic partner for Spain and should continue to be so. We have come a long way in certain aspects of bilateral relations, such as security, but this success has overshadowed the potential of multilateral frameworks and has possibly moulded other issues in terms of security. It is very important that Spain should play a role in regional integration in North Africa. This can only be achieved within a broader framework involving the participation of the EU. In this respect we have to be aware of the need to "Europeanise" certain policies over which we have previously had control, such as migration. We should collectivise parts of the Hispano-Moroccan initiatives with our partners. Until now the security component has been essential to understanding our relations, but it is necessary to balance this strategy with a relationship that gives greater scope to the economic and cultural arenas and contacts between the two societies. In general terms, the Moroccans know a great deal about Spain but awareness in Spanish society of the Moroccan reality is still limited and highly influenced by the media. Educational exchanges, collaboration between businesses and public administrations and the mobility of researchers could play a crucial role in correcting biased perceptions on both sides.

Looking to the future the great challenge for Spain's relations with Morocco involves knowing how to cooperate together while also recognising, and constructively addressing, our differences. Both PSOE and PP governments have until now preferred to leave areas of incomprehension to one side in order to safeguard cooperation on such issues as migration and security.

We do not understand this reasoning and believe that Spain should pursue multidimensional relations embodying "honest coexistence" with Morocco where, while cooperating on issues of shared interest, we could be in disagreement on other areas (for example the question of the Western Sahara, where bipartisanship in Spain is increasingly jeopardising the Saharawi people's hopes of self-determination).

We will also give our active support at both the bilateral and multilateral levels to the political and social development of our southern neighbour.

19. It is sometimes said that the tools used to promote Spain's interests abroad (diplomacy, trade, culture, security, aid, etc.) are uncoordinated due to poor cooperation between the public and private sectors, or occasional conflicts with the Spanish regions or ministerial fragmentation. What changes do you think are necessary to strengthen these tools? What role do you think the prime minister's office should play in this context?

I believe that there is a high degree of coordination, although clearly we all need to work at improving it and reducing possible dysfunctions. To a large extent this is one of the goals of the Foreign Action Strategy and Act: to improve the coordination of the various players that have a foreign presence, while respecting the constitutional principle that foreign policy is the exclusive competence of the State and its management is in the hands of the government. This is why the Act sets out the competences of the Foreign Policy Council, a collegiate body that acts as the advisory entity to the leader of the government.

Under this system, without compromising the role of planning, implementing and coordinating foreign policy, which pertains to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, greater responsibility is therefore given to the leader of the government in coordinating and driving the foreign policy of the State, with the aim of more effectively addressing the reality of a modern State, with its various political and administrative levels, which may in turn conduct their activities abroad within the framework of competences established by the constitution.

I believe that Spain needs to be able to attain strategic goals, putting all the tools of foreign policy under the same leadership in order to secure them. In my view it is essential to establish the clear pre-eminence of the leader of the government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation [Spanish acronym: MAEC] in the task of directing foreign policy. On the other hand, it is fundamental to make our foreign deployment more democratic and participatory, acknowledging the efforts of the various agencies that do in fact take part in it (such as the Autonomous Communities and the town halls, business and trade union organisations, the world of culture, the political parties and parliaments, etc.). In other words it is a matter of preserving the

predominant role of the prime minister and the MAEC while actively promoting the necessary institutional coordination. In fact we have committed ourselves to drawing up new regulations for the foreign services based on wide-ranging dialogue with all the political forces plus all the Autonomous Communities and stakeholders involved.

I believe that both PP and PSOE governments have abused such tools by politicising them, while at the same time failing to invest in the political leadership needed to drive our foreign policy. Our foreign policy should be underpinned by clear leadership emanating from the prime minister's office. But this does not mean that politicians should be in charge of the planning, the design, the implementation and still less the evaluation. We have to reduce as much as possible the appointment of politicians as ambassadors and representatives at international organisations. We have to give the civil service back the independence and the means to have incentives to improve our foreign deployment for the benefit of our citizens. We have to rely more on Spanish professionals, especially those who work abroad, and persuade them to reconnect with a nation-project.

The lack of coordination does exist and represents a significant burden in terms of efficacy and efficiency but above all in terms of transparency and democracy, because there is a very widespread perception that policy is closed, concealed and secret, the exclusive preserve of a select few. In order to disrupt this dynamic, improve coordination, open up foreign policy to the public and address other problems (the lack of consistency between policies, the prioritisation of the "3 Ds" etc.), Podemos advocates a thorough reform of the process of creating and implementing foreign policy, proposing:

(a) The creation of a Government Office of Human Rights, reporting to the prime minister's office under the leadership of someone with the rank of secretary of state, to coordinate the government's activities in promoting human rights, with executive functions in the fulfilment of Spain's international commitments in the human rights field, whether civil, political, economic or social rights, or of childhood or gender equality, both in the domestic sphere and in foreign policy.

(b) The aforementioned office will coordinate the efforts of all the ministries through an interministerial commission of foreign policy and deployment, acting in coordination with the office of the ombudsman and accounting for its activity and management on a monthly basis to parliament. It will also be the seat of a state commission on human rights, with representatives from NGOs and civil and social organisations concerned with the defence of human rights, and professional organisations (the General Lawyers' Council and so on),

with advice and consultative functions but also those of evaluation and accountability. This office will coordinate the development and implementation of a National Human Rights and Gender Equality Plan. It will also set up a Gender Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation to carry out an assessment of gender in Spain's foreign policy.

(c) Reform of the processes of drawing up and implementing foreign policies and strategies (thematic or sector-based, geographical, etc.) which will include, among other things, the creation of a Citizens' Council for Foreign Policy, which will foster the participation of civil society in the elaboration, implementation, oversight, control and evaluation of foreign policy. It will also be necessary to improve the transparency and accountability of all the ministries involved in foreign policy to parliament, the ombudsman's office and other mechanisms of democratic control, as well as to civil society.

20. Do you think it is possible to speak in Spain of a consensus on the major strands of our foreign policy? Do you think that, as is often said, foreign policy by its very nature requires this type of consensus?

In general, I think that there is a consensus regarding the overall outline of foreign policy: European policy, security and defence policy, the importance of the Mediterranean region, of Latin America and the central role of the UN system. There is always the occasional difference of opinion, but at least the two major parties agree on the basic principles of foreign policy. I think that a good example of the consensus between the two main parties was the signing of the pact against jihadist terrorism last May.

It is our conviction that foreign policy and deployment should be a policy of State, while being aware that foreign policy is also a matter of politics. The important thing for us is to reach a consensus on what the interests of Spain are and the model of society we want to advocate and transmit. During this parliament we socialists have reached out to the government on the main issues relating to foreign policy, security and defence. On some issues we have obtained the consensus needed but on others not. I must add that this was more due to lack of will on the government side than because of the presence of deep-seated differences. There have however been times when such differences have been both present and profound, such as in the Iraq war.

We are utterly convinced that foreign policy is a policy of State and thus we cannot take decisions that fail to take into account either the political inheritance or consensus with the other political forces in those strategic issues that underpin our activities.

Over the last 30 years there has been a degree of consensus both on the most important geographical areas for Spanish foreign policy (Europe, Latin America and the Mediterranean) and on multilateralism, full insertion into the EU and the peace and security architectures of NATO and the United Nations, as well as some of the most important goals (peace, security, human rights, promotion of democracy and development). The differences have arisen over what should be given priority and where the money should be spent (evidenced by the about-turns in aid policy, for example, the budgets and recipients for which vary drastically from parliament to parliament).

Beyond the apparent discourse and agreements however, the problem has often been that the political priorities and the human and economic resources have been aimed more at the defence of particular Spanish economic and geopolitical interests than an effective attainment of the declared objectives. Furthermore there is much less consensus over the significance and content of these objectives, and on the means and resources needed to attain them.

All these issues need to form part of a wide-ranging debate enabling the creation of a new consensus that is broader, deeper, more democratic and above all more sustainable regarding the authentic hallmarks of Spain's foreign policy.

21. If so, how would you construct a wide-ranging agreement that would lend stability to Spain's foreign policy?

Foreign policy, as a policy of State, requires the highest possible degree of consensus because this provides us with stability, predictability and credibility, something that is very difficult to attain and extremely easy to lose. I have always sought and will seek consensus on issues that constitute priorities for Spain. I believe that in addition to political consensus it is necessary to improve social consensus. Our citizens need to be able to see themselves reflected in our foreign policy, which should transmit our constitutional and social values. This is why it is crucial to increase the levels of transparency, understanding and parliamentary control.

These principles have inspired a significant number of the reforms that we have undertaken in the foreign policy arena during this parliament.

It is necessary to engage in wide-ranging dialogue with all the political forces, the Autonomous Communities and the stakeholders involved so we can jointly work out and define the kind of country we want to be and, in this instance, the foreign policy we wish to develop, and what our priorities and our goals and the means of obtaining them should be. The PP government has missed an opportunity in this parliament, which included the passing of a Foreign Action and Service Act that managed to unite in opposition a rare consensus of political forces, the Council of State and professionals. Nor has the Foreign Action Strategy put forward by the government won the support of any parliamentary group. This is why we propose creating a new one by means of wide-ranging dialogue.

Foreign policy should be perceived as a team sport and not a game of tennis, in which a single individual plays against another. The best place to build the necessary consensus is parliament. But under the current regulations and the prevailing shortage of resources our Congress cannot act as a deliberative chamber. At the same time we are committed to our foreign policy having a higher profile in Spanish society. We have to ensure transparency for all our activities and share them with the general public. Decisions cannot be taken without having had an appropriate level of public debate. The media, the think tanks and the universities must be participants in this cultural change towards greater openness to the international dimension. Only then shall our institutions be connected to global changes enabling us to better address the challenges to come.

Podemos views as essential a reform of the process of drawing up and implementing foreign policy, one that makes it more democratic, inclusive and transparent, so that goals are agreed (as well as the significance of such goals) through the participation of a wide assemblage of the stakeholders concerned (the government, parliament, regional and local parliaments, civil society, etc.) and enabling clearer consensuses to be reached on the significance and contents of foreign policy goals and on priorities in such a way that they are able to outlive political fluctuations.

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