



ESPAÑA

**INTERVENCIÓN DEL
PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA**

**REUNIÓN DE ALTO NIVEL SOBRE
FINANCIACIÓN AL DESARROLLO**

Nueva York, 14 de septiembre de 2005

(Cotejar con intervención definitiva)

**STATEMENT BY
THE PRESIDENT OF
THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN**

**AT THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING
ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT**

New York, 14 September 2005

(Check against delivery)

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Heads of State and Government

The people of Spain have traditionally demonstrated deeply-rooted feelings of international solidarity, which have grown ever stronger in recent times. Echoing this widespread and noble sentiment, my Government has made development cooperation one of its hallmarks, one of the paramount values guiding its policies.

We have undertaken to double our Official Development Assistance in four years, and are on target. By 2006, we will fulfill the Monterrey commitment and by 2008 we will reach 0.5% of our GDP. Spain has set itself a firm target and a specific deadline for achieving its purpose. We want to extend our solidarity to those in need by donating 0.7% of our national wealth by 2012.

Commitments agreed at European Union level are along these same lines. Our contributions to international organizations and United Nations programmes have also increased.

Spanish aid is increasing in quantity but we also want to improve the quality of our Official Development Assistance, both in terms of contents and recipients to improve its efficiency. One fifth will be devoted to basic social services, such as nutrition, health and education. Additionally, at least another 20% will go to the least developed countries. Specifically, our cooperation with the poorest countries in Africa will increase the most in the coming years.

However, the challenge is so great that increasing the amount and quality of aid is not enough in itself. Although we consider that Official Development Assistance should be the main source of funding, innovative and complementary financing mechanisms clearly need to be found.

That is the reasoning behind the Initiative against Hunger and Poverty. Spaniards feel proud that their country has helped promote an initiative, which defines the fight against poverty as one of the worlds most urgent and pressing challenges.

Since last year, the technical group has been discussing a number of proposals, to which Spain has made an active contribution. We have proposed that special consideration be given to remittances sent by emigrants as a source and tool of development.

Remittances amounted to \$80 billion in 2002 and it is estimated that at present they account for more than \$100 billion.

They are now the second biggest source of capital for developing countries,

ahead even of ODA. We must create the conditions in order to maximize their benefits and therefore reduce the transfer costs so that less money is lost in the process. We want facilitate access to micro-credit facilities for recipient families, so that they may undertake initiatives and projects to enhance development. Simultaneous education campaigns should be implemented so that both senders and recipients can suitably invest these resources, which may become development multipliers.

We are encouraged by the positive international reaction to this proposal. The Spanish Government will continue to work, in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank and various Spanish financial institutions, to ensure that the initiative brings tangible benefits as early as possible to the recipient countries.

Solidarity is not just a word for Spain. That is why my Government will be contributing \$240 million over the next 20 years to the Global Alliance for Vaccinations and Immunization. We shall provide € 9 million annually from 2006 to 2025. With this contribution we will help saving thousands of lives every year.

Spain has also adopted measures regarding foreign debt that will enable our country to participate actively in multilateral debt relief initiatives with Highly Indebted Poor Countries.

Spain is also becoming involved in projects to swap debt for public investment in key areas of sustainable human development, such as education, environment and infrastructures, with specific emphasis on heavily indebted middle-income countries. This initiative is taking shape within the context of the Ibero-American Summits, the next of which will be held in Spain in October.

Measures aimed at consolidating progress in middle-income countries and to prevent any weakening of achievements are extremely important. The International Community should reward, not penalize, the efforts of those who are gradually consolidating a certain level of development. We should not forget that 4 out of every 5 poor people in the world live in these middle-income nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Spanish people believe it is possible to build a world free of poverty. We believe that achieving this in one generation is no utopia; we have the means to do so. We believe that the fight against hunger and poverty is the most noble war that humanity can wage. Rest assured that the Government and the people of Spain want to be on the front line of this battle.

Thank you.

