

**STRATEGY
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SPANISH SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY

BY

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Spanish Security and Defense Policy

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ABSTRACT

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Spain is a nation which only until relatively recently (1975) was under military rule. After General Franco died, the overall foreign policy objectives consisted of normalizing international relations and bringing Spain into line with the democracies of Western Europe.

As any nation's goals through its foreign policy are national security, economic well-being and growth, and the forwarding of its ideologies and aims, Spain is no exception, and so utilizes United Nations, European Union (EU) and military alliances in fulfilling its security, defense, diplomatic and economic objectives.

The focus of this paper is to explain how step by step Spain is affirming its global perspective, which put and end to the 150 years of isolation, and the participation in the collective security systems as well as its contribution to the regional defense system.

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INTRODUCTION

Spain, as a member state of the European Union is integrated in all the areas of the common European structures, including the defense.

Spanish defense policy, relates to a series of international commitments that, on the one hand, demand Spain to make every effort to fulfill them, but on the other, allows the Spanish people to share the security framework with the western countries.

Spain is the third largest country in size within European NATO. It has the sixth largest population, the fifth largest GNP, the sixth largest merchant marine, the third largest civil air fleet, the sixth largest military establishment, and is the sixth largest arms' exporter.¹

As a middle European power capable of playing at least a moderately assertive role in international and security affairs, Spain wants to do so in the future and is trying to be engaged in all the most important decisions made by the international and regional organizations that can affect its areas of interest. To better understand where Spain stands and where it appears to be headed, this paper will examine the domestic and international inputs to Spain's current situation and the Spanish perception of threat. This paper will also discuss cover Spanish foreign policy concerning security and defense matters and the main organizations dealing with these subjects in Europe.

SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICIES

SPANISH FOREIGN POLICY

The general foreign policy objectives after the Spanish Constitution was born in 1978 consisted of normalizing international relations and bringing Spain into line with the democracies of Western Europe. The keystones in this transition period were the consensus reached among the different political parties and the role played by King Juan Carlos, who, with an intense international agenda contributed decisively to the success of foreign policy.

International commitments in the sphere of human rights were formally assumed at the level of the United Nations as well as within the Council of Europe. On 28 September 1976, the International Treaties on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic and Cultural Rights were signed, which came into being in 1977 and, at the end of that year, Spain became a member of the Council of Europe and signed the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Basic Liberties.²

From 1982 to the present, the European orientation has been reaffirmed as successive changes in foreign policy have taken place under the different Spanish governments. Spain has continuously looked towards the European project as a necessarily global perspective and process, involving political, economic, social and cultural aspects, as well as military matters regarding security and defense.

Other essential dimensions of Spanish foreign activity, Latin America and the Mediterranean, were reinforced, without losing sight of the universal character of Spain's international relations.

The principles of Spanish foreign policy are:

- The respect for international law
- The search for peace
- Disarmament
- The move towards a new international order based on justice
- The defense of human rights
- Cooperation and international solidarity

PERCEIVED THREATS TO SECURITY

Given the long tradition of Spanish neutrality and non-involvement in European affairs, little in the way of classic across-the-border threat confronts Spain. Certainly, Portugal represents no security problem. Neither does a democratic France. The Spanish have always considered Moscow too far from Spain's borders to worry about in any serious way.³

Increased security for Ceuta and Melilla, the impending return of Gibraltar, a desire for more influence in North Africa, control of the vital sea lines of communications (SLOCs) serving Spain, and the defense of economy are the general defense and foreign policy goals. These goals are now considered more attainable, particularly as Spain takes a more active and cooperative role in regional and world affairs.⁴

Thus, the elements that define Spanish foreign and defense concerns can be considered in the following interrelated categories: first, those factors that affect the vulnerability of the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla located in Africa; second the protection of vital sea lines of communication to and from Spain; third, those issues bearing on the geographically close and politically important states of North Africa (mainly the Maghreb) and the Middle East; and, fourth, as a result of growing Europeanization, those concerns connected now more directly with the stabilization of Eastern Europe.⁵

PEACE AND SECURITY POLICIES

As a member of many international organizations, including the United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Western European Union (WEU), General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), etc., Spain has made a strong effort to become involved and instrumental in international affairs. Fulfilling leaderships roles, such as the EU presidency for the latter half of 1995, and holding the current secretary-generalship of NATO, along with being named representative to the UN Security Council for 1993/94 are important means to this end.⁶ In addition, Spain's membership in the European Union has led to the attempt to strongly support the adoption of a unified European foreign policy.

The security policy defined by Spain over the past few years was presented by Felipe Gonzalez in October 1984 to the Congress of Deputies. It would be called his "Decalogue" on peace and security policy, and this proposal was intended to be the basis for the re-establishment of a consensus of all the parliamentary forces regarding national security and defense policies. Today the same principles and goals remain under the rule of the new president of Spain Jose Maria Aznar and his party the Partido Popular (PP).⁷

Its most important points are:

- The maintenance of the existing situation with respect to the Atlantic Alliance; in other words, membership without incorporation into the integrated military structure. (After the Brussels meeting in NATO HQ on December 16th 1997, Spain is now committed to become fully integrated into the military structure.)

- The maintenance of the bilateral defense relationship with the United States, but with a progressive diminution of the American military presence on Spanish soil.

- The denuclearization of Spanish territory, with the possibility of the signing of the Treaty of Nuclear Non-Proliferation.

- The desire to integrate Spain into the Western European Union. (It was accomplished in 1988)

- The return of Gibraltar, which would be brought about by, among other reasons, continued Spanish membership in NATO.
- A Spanish presence in international fora dealing with disarmament.
- Strengthening bilateral relations with other western European countries in defense matters.
- The elaboration of a Joint Strategic Plan (Plan Estrategico Conjunto-PEC)

Thus, the definition of the national policy for peace and security was based on three aspects: the Atlantic Alliance (NATO); the Western European Union (WEU); and the bilateral defense relationship with the United States.

SPANISH MEDITERRANEAN POLICY

Another area to which Spanish foreign policy devotes special attention is the Mediterranean. The southern region, from North Africa through the Middle East, is viewed as potentially the most troublesome for Spain as a result of such factors as:

- Rising Islamic radical movements which might lead to military intervention to bring stability, evacuate civilians, or protect citizens.
- Mounting demographic and economics pressures that could send a flood of immigrants and refugees into southern Europe in the late 1990s.
- Demands for water that result in beggar-thy-neighbor policies.

- Fears that internal conflicts in southern rim countries will generate terrorist attacks in Western Europe.⁸

Accordingly, the desire to improve relations with the various coastal states of the Mediterranean was intensified. Spain established diplomatic relations with Israel (17-Jan-86) and Albania (12-Sept-86) and raised the status of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) representation in Madrid. On this latter issue, the Government has repeatedly expressed its support for the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people as a basis for a just solution to the conflict and the right of Israel to live within secure frontiers. The traditional good relations with the Arab world have been consolidated and intensified. Moreover, Spain had at all times supported the holding of a Peace Conference on the Middle East, which was hosted in Madrid in October 1991.

Particularly important in the Mediterranean area are the relations with the North African countries, especially the Maghreb (Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia). This region in particular represents an additional threat to Spanish security. The primary importance of the metropolitan and extra territorial holdings of Spain vis-à-vis Northern Africa derives from the short distances between Spanish possessions (Ceuta and Melilla) and the commanding positions they offer relative to air and maritime routes that constitute the "umbilical chord to Western Europe".⁹ The issue of the Spanish cities in North Africa is

also very much a part of the ongoing debate over Spain's participation in NATO because NATO has not committed itself to the security of Spain's entire national territory. NATO is committed to the defense of the strategic Canary Islands, but not to Ceuta and Melilla.

However, a period of cooperation began in 1991, when a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed with Morocco, and in the Western Sahara dispute, the Spanish government has expressed its support for the peace plan proposed by the UN.

Finally, the general political-military instability of the North African region could also pose a threat to Spain and the rest of Western Europe. Thus, the most likely challenges to Spanish and European interests could well take place outside the legal confines of the NATO alliance. They might include: civil disturbances; terrorism; embargoes; production cuts; threats to SLOCs or choke points; the overthrow or attempted overthrow of friendly regimes; transborder incursions; and, wars between regional rivals. It is true that the recent events in Algeria with a situation very close to a civil war is a matter of concern for Spain. The current struggle between Islamic extremists and the Algerian government has aroused a special worry in Spain. Six years of domestic violence have caused tens of thousands of casualties with no end in sight. A radical Islamic victory now seems less likely than before but still remains a possibility. It would have enormous repercussions in Algeria and may also

threaten and possibly transform the political landscape of neighboring Morocco and Tunisia. In its wake, hundreds of thousands of Western-oriented Arabs and Berbers would flee to southern Europe, where substantial unemployment, illegal immigration, and attendant social problems already exist. Efforts by Spain and other European countries to enter into a dialogue with southern rim countries on economic and security problems were launched in Barcelona in November 1995, but yielded only limited results by late 1996.¹⁰

Also, the not so clear disease of King Hassan II in Morocco, and the problem of political instability about his successor and what will happen after his death is followed by Spanish people very carefully.

SPANISH LATIN AMERICA POLICY

Another important component of Spanish foreign policy is its link to Latin America and its desire to utilize the linguistic, historical, geographical and cultural connections to embrace economic benefits for both parties. In late December 1995, a landmark agreement was signed between EU and Mercosur, the Latin America trade bloc, which will make South America the foreign policy priority for Spain over the next few years, according to President Aznar, in a statement made prior to his party's victory in 1996. This agreement also served to heighten the role of Spain as mediator, and is part of the Spanish effort to become the point of contact between Europe and South America. Friendship and

cooperation treaties, including defense matters, have been signed with Argentina, Mexico, Venezuela, Chile, Brazil and Colombia.¹¹

In the case of Cuba, the new policy of President Aznar is to be the leader in crafting the new EU Common Position in order to promote a peaceful transition to democracy in the Island. Now, according to the words of Madeleine Albright, Spain and US maintain a close cooperation in this subject.¹²

THE EVOLVING DEFENSE SYSTEM

The rationale for dealing with the myriad issues associated with Spanish security is primarily based on two strategies: the "strategy of national interest" and the "strategy of cooperation", accompanied by an extensive military reform program. The reform of the armed forces involves a complex modernization package and considerable legislation, plus a Joint Strategic Plan (PEC) with separate components for each of the three military services, Army, Navy and Air Force.

The first strategy of Spain's national interests has clearly defined the geographic area as falling within two triangles: one formed by the vertices of the Azores, Canaries, and Gibraltar; the other by Gibraltar, the Balearics and the Western tip of Sicily. The Strait of Gibraltar stands at the apex of both triangles and the convergence and middle point of the line that links the main territorial components of Spain.¹³ Well established doctrine dictates that Spanish political and military power depend on Spain's ability to control these strategic areas.

Nevertheless, Spain understands that by itself it can never adequately deal with the problems which might materialize within this primary zone of national interest. As a consequence, Spain has articulated a "strategy of cooperation" to guarantee the defense or control of the areas defined as primary national concerns. Over the years, Spain has steadily evolved toward more involvement and participation in military, political, and economic efforts within a European/NATO context.

INTEGRATION IN THE WESTERN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The process leading to Spanish membership in the European Community culminated on January 1st, 1986, after the signing of the Treaty for the Accession of Spain to the European Economic Community (EEC), on June 12th 1985 in the Royal Palace in Madrid. This provided Spanish foreign policy with a new dimension within the framework of European political cooperation. The firm Spanish support for the strengthening of the community process led to the ratification by the legislature, with the virtually unanimous support of the political forces of the treaty on the European Union. In the Treaty on European Union, provision has been made for the setting in motion of the European Monetary Union and common security policies.

The EC's Maastricht Treaty in 1991 created the European Union and projected a full monetary union (EMU) at a very propitious time: Domestic climates were good, there was genuine optimism over peace dividends and relations with Russia, and Bosnia was not yet a European tragedy of major proportions. Now the state of the economy, inter-European competition, declining defense expenditures, immigration problems, and crime are currently shaping the debate over integration.

The International Conference Group (ICG) opened in March 1996 in Turin, Italy, to begin a large-scale review of Maastricht and the new Europe with special focus on decision-making, especially

for common foreign and defense policies, and establishing conditions for new EU membership.¹⁴

As a member of the EU, Spain has worked hard to forge a consensus for action on an important range of foreign policy issues, in an attempt to devise the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which was fully recognized in the Single European Act of 1986 and which Maastricht promised¹⁵.

Spanish endeavors include improved US/EU relations highlighted by securing approval from the EU for a comprehensive Trans-Atlantic Agenda, and a US/EU Action Plan which commit these nations to more than 100 cooperative actions such as joint efforts in Bosnian reconstruction and the coordination of global aid programs, to liberalize trade and investment, combat international crime and narcotics trafficking. The United States and NATO have, for more than 40 years, played a decisive role in ensuring the security and freedom of Western Europe. They should continue to do so in the years to come. Unlike the United States, Europe does not possess a nuclear force comparable to Russia's (nor is it likely to acquire one in the future). Also with regard to conventional forces, while the previous imbalance has been considerably reduced, it is not Europe's interest to maintain excessively high troop levels.

In addition, the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) should be complemented with measures regarding the Southern Flank. In the Mediterranean, in addition to helping revive the

economy, Europe has a special interest in contributing to an area of security as well as of social and political stability. Spanish leadership aided in the adoption of the EUROMED initiative which brought together Europe with its Islamic neighbors to foster the production of a forward-looking strategy against divergence. An EU-Turkish customs union passed through the European Parliament with Spanish support, and growing attention has been directed toward a post-Cold War trade and aid policy.¹⁶

ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the broadest and most comprehensive forum within the European security architecture. It spans the geographical area from Vladivostok to Vancouver, comprising all states in Europe, Central Asia and North America.

At the Lisbon Summit in December 1996, the heads of state and government (including Spain), recognized that European security requires cooperation and coordination among participating states and among European and transatlantic organizations. They also agreed that the OSCE is particularly well suited as a forum to enhance such cooperation and complementary in order to respond effectively to threats and challenges in the OSCE area.

Spain has the OSCE's President of the Parliamentary Assembly Mr. Javier Ruperez in Copenhagen, and the OSCE's High Representative in charge of civilian implementation in Bosnia, whose mission includes meetings with senior NATO officials and

the preparation of local Bosnian elections.¹⁷ Also the Spanish collaboration for Mediterranean stability to maintain the peace in Albania with one Infantry Battalion and logistic support, was under UN and OSCE umbrellas.

The main objective of the work in the OSCE is the "European Security Model for the 21st Century".¹⁸ To this end the Heads of State and Government tasked the OSCE to define the modalities for enhanced cooperation among organizations in a "Platform for Cooperative Security". The aim should be to enhance the degree of cooperation and coordination among relevant security organizations across the full spectrum of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, so as to ensure that the comparative advantages of each organization can be combined and fully exploited in the pursuit of peace and stability. It includes the perspective of developing a European Security Charter according to the decision taken at the OSCE Ministerial meeting in Copenhagen last December 1997 with a view to continuing the work in 1998.¹⁹

SPAIN AT THE WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

Spain's incorporation into the Western European Union was a logical consequence of full integration into Western Europe and of its integration in the European defense system. On 18 April 1988, the WEU's Council of Ministers agreed to invite Spain and Portugal to open negotiations with a view to their adhesion to the modified Treaty of Brussels, the constitutive text of this

organization. The Spanish Government accepted the invitation immediately. The Spanish Government demonstrated that it was convinced that a revitalized European Union would constitute a useful and complementary instrument of the Single European Act and would be one of the most effective ways to reinforce the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance. Spain's adherence to the WEU, concluded the Government's message, is fully compatible with Spanish peace and security policy, and therefore, with the terms approved in the referendum on Spain's continued membership in the Atlantic Alliance. It symbolizes one more step in the nation's full incorporation into the European scene.

Formal negotiations for accession began in May 1988 and full incorporation took place on November 14th that year. With the signing of the accession protocol, Spain's rapid incorporation into the WEU displayed Europe's recognition of Spain's determination to contribute to the European Community defense.

For their own defense the countries of the WEU, at least those that are members of NATO, will continue to rely primarily on the Atlantic Alliance. This idea doesn't mean that, within the Alliance, the Europeans cannot increase their role through the WEU. Indeed, the scaling down of the American presence on the continent should make the development of the WEU's and, in general, Europe's role and influence, in the framework of the Alliance, increasingly relevant. But again, the defense of Europe

still relies essentially on the solidity and effectiveness of NATO's structures.

RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

The other aspect of Spanish security and defense policy is its defense cooperation with the United States.

The origin of this relationship goes back to September 26th, 1953, with the signing of the Conventions on Economic Aid and Mutual Defense. In 1968, a period of consultations began for the purpose of drafting the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement which was signed on 6th August 1970 and was confirmed with the status of a treaty in January 1976, valid until May 1982. Subsequently, the Friendship, Defense and Cooperation Agreement was signed on 7th February 1982. In 1984, talks began on the reduction of the presence of American forces on Spanish territory, leading to the signing of the Defense Cooperation Agreement on 1st December 1988, which remains until today.

The American reduction of forces in Europe, should not antagonize the United States. Indeed, Europe's contribution should be welcomed in Washington because it could relieve part of the burden that the US has borne for 40 years in defending our common security and civilization. This is a burden that has certainly not become any lighter with the emergence of new threats and challenges, regional crisis, ethnic conflicts and the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

According to the words from Vice President Gore's speech to US-Spain Council in the Forum held at the State Department the 31st of October 1997, "Together we are working to build strong and inclusive European security and political structures through reform of the North Atlantic Alliance and outreach to Russia. We are working together to enlarge and adapt NATO to the new realities of Europe, and we are committed to pursuing new initiatives to open global markets so all may enjoy greater economy freedom and prosperity".²⁰

SPAIN AT NATO

Spain was the last nation to join NATO and is participating in the Alliance with a particular model that excludes the membership to the integrated military structure.

On May 30th, 1982, under the centrist (UCD) Government, Spain deposited in Washington the instrument of accession to NATO, and thus became a member. Following the election victory of the Socialist party (PSOE), the new Government decided to suspend the process of incorporation into the structure of the Alliance and called a referendum to decide whether Spain should remain within the military structure of the organization.

In October 1984, the prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, presented to the Spanish Congress the prior cited ten points on a Peace and Security policy, drawn up as a basis for the restoration of a consensus of all the political forces regarding the national security and defense policy. In the same speech, the

prime minister suggested that a parliamentary debate be held on the ten points for the purpose of disseminating information which would help the citizens to make a decision on whether Spain should stay in the Alliance, by means of a referendum. On March 12th, 1986, the referendum was held as announced by the Government. It took the following form:

1. Spanish participation shall not include membership in the integrated military structure.

2. The ban on installing, storing or introducing nuclear weapons on Spanish soil shall be maintained.

3. A gradual reduction in the military presence of the United States in Spain shall be carried out.

The referendum showed a result favorable to the government position (in favor 52.49% - against 39.84%), and from that time on, Spain began to work out its own model for participation in the Alliance, within the limits laid down in the referendum.²¹

The holding in Madrid, for the first time, for the spring Ministerial Session of North Atlantic Council in June 1988 symbolized the consolidation of Spanish participation in NATO.

The basic characteristics of the model for Spanish participation in the Alliance, are contained in the official communications that the Spanish Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense sent to their NATO counterparts and to the Secretary General of the Organization after the referendum. They consist primarily of the non-incorporation into the integrated military

structure, the maintenance of the non-nuclearization of Spanish territory, the progressive reduction of the American military presence on Spanish soil and the claim for sovereignty over Gibraltar.

The complementary characteristics are a consequence of the general principles of participation in the Alliance presented by the Spanish Government and approved by the Atlantic Council in May 1986. Spain's membership consists essentially of the participation in the North Atlantic Council and its subsidiary bodies, the Defense Planning Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group, as well as the military contribution carried out through the Coordination Agreements between the Spanish and the Allied Commands.

The approval of the general directives for the Spanish military contribution to the Atlantic Alliance has undergone a long process since October 1986, when the Spanish memorandum containing the general principles was first presented. After three successive rounds, the Spanish ambassador to NATO presented, on 18th January 1988, to the Secretary General of the Organization, a letter in which the Spanish Government explained in great detail the general directives for Spain's military contribution. The Spanish missions to NATO were as follows:

- Defense of Spanish territory
- Naval and airborne operations in the Eastern Atlantic
- Control of Strait of Gibraltar and its accesses

- Naval and airborne operations in the Western Mediterranean
- Control and defense of airspace in the zone under Spanish responsibility and cooperation in adjacent zones
- Use of Spanish territory as a multifunctional rear-guard (transit, support and logistic) platform.

Finally, on 1st December 1988, NATO's Defense Planning Committee approved the general directives of Spain's military authorities. Subsequently, the Atlantic Council took note of these directives at its meeting of 8-9 December in Brussels. This marked the end of a period of political discussions, and left the technical-military specifications to be resolved.

The materialization of Spain's military contribution began with the signing, in May 1990, of the first two coordination agreements between the Spanish armed forces and the military commands, in relation to the execution of sea and air maneuvers in the Eastern Atlantic and of air defense.

Later, in May 1991, two new agreements on the coordination of the defense of Spanish territory and air-sea operations in the Western Mediterranean came into effect.

The last two agreements regarding the control and defense of the Strait of Gibraltar and its accesses, and the use of Spanish territory as a rear-guard and logistic support zone were signed in June 1992. With these agreements, the definition of Spain's defensive contribution to the Atlantic Alliance was achieved, maintaining non-incorporation in the command structure with the

aim of fulfilling the condition of no participation in the integrated military command.

After the elections in 1996, the new Spanish Government, under the Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, decided to review our contribution to NATO in order to be fully integrated in the NATO's military structure. On 15th of November 1996, the Spanish Parliament voted overwhelmingly to permit Spain's full participation in NATO, after 14 years in which Madrid had been an alliance member but never had its own officers as NATO commanders. With the formality of a parliament endorsement, the conservative government had to negotiate for Spain to become a full partner in the Alliance of 16 nations.

Military structure. Main problems.

In November 1991 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization published "The Alliance New Strategic Concept", intending to position NATO for the demands of the 21st century.²²

While the New Strategic Concept did not provide detailed guidance for revamping NATO command and control structures, it called for establishing flexible command and control arrangements that would facilitate the new emphasis on crisis management and conflict prevention.²³ One month later, the Defense Planning Committee (DPC) announced the first major steps in reorganizing NATO Command and control structures. These efforts, as well as a number of additional initiatives, have led to a substantial reorganization of Alliance command and control arrangements.²⁴

However the existing structure represents the limits of what was politically possible at the time.

A lot of problems needed to be solved and finally the last structure was approved on 2 December 1997 in the Ministerial meeting of the Alliance.

Spain had after several years working at NATO under the already cited six coordination agreements, clearly assumed that they only were valid for peace time but they were not working properly in crisis or war time. The last Crisis Exercise (CRISEX -97), played among NATO HQ and the countries in order to test the command and control structure, provided a scenario that included a serious conflict in the area of Canary Islands. At the end of the exercise, the lessons learned showed that these coordination agreements did not work, mainly in the air space command and control area. This point was a clear input to direct Spanish effort to be fully integrated in the future. The Government's conditions that Spain had to be integrated were²⁵:

- To assign a new command to Spain according to its contribution to the Alliance
- To remove the British Command in Gibraltar
- To develop the concept of European Defense Identity and the NATO relations with Russia.
- To ban nuclear weapons from all Spanish territory

The first problem was Portugal. It was a full member of the military structure from the creation of NATO. They have a command

of second level in Lisbon, IBERLANT, under Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT). The Spanish intentions were to create a joint "subregional" NATO command and to have under a Spanish Commander the control of forces protecting Spain and the Atlantic and Mediterranean access to the Strait of Gibraltar,²⁶ including the Canary Islands. Portugal perceived that idea as a competition to remove it from the control of the area of responsibility that they have today and also a serious intent from Spain to have a command of second level in Madrid. Spain said that military responsibility could be shared by the two countries, but insists that it have the right to exercise responsibility over all its territory, including maritime access²⁷. After several meetings with the Portuguese commanders, they agreed with the Spanish authorities to release the control through an area around 60 miles of radius with the center in the Canary Islands, under the Spanish Command. Thus Portugal continues with its own area of responsibility in the Atlantic Ocean, and Spain maintains the control on its own territorial soil and both sides of Gibraltar Strait.

The second problem was the British Command in Gibraltar. Spain never recognized this Command and had strong restrictions related to the use of the airspace and the maritime waters. The main Spanish complaint is that the UK decided unilaterally, taking advantage of different Spanish civil wars and the weakness of the government, to increase the land area of Gibraltar to

build the airport and the navy facilities outside the terms signed in the agreement on the rock. For this reason, before Spain's incorporation to NATO, any aircraft or ship coming from Gibraltar is not allowed to land or to moor in Spanish territory.

During the conversations last December 1997, to solve the new NATO military structure, UK was trying to use the veto power against the Spanish aspirations if Spain doesn't release the prohibitions in Gibraltar territory. The General Naumann, Chief of the Military Committee, insisted that the solution to that conflict shouldn't postpone the agreement on the new military structure and it should be resolved in a bilateral context. At the end in the Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting of NATO the 16th of December 1997, UK released the veto, and the new military structure of NATO was approved. With this approval, Spain will have a Subregional Command and the Command of Gibraltar will disappear.²⁸

The last two conditions to be integrated in the military structure related to the nuclear weapons and the relations with Russia have been well accomplished. Spain does not have any kind of nuclear artifact on Spanish soil from its first commitment with the Alliance in 1982 although it is fair to say that all the defense plans in Spain are based not only in conventional weapons but the nuclear protection from NATO's umbrella. The NATO agreement with the Russians (Founding Act, Paris 27-5-97) before the Madrid Summit in July 1996 in order to accomplish the

enlargement with three new countries, Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, was the signal that NATO is working correctly and Spain wants to be linked in the same way.

CONCLUSIONS

Spain is totally committed to the security and defense issues in its Southwestern part of Europe. That means it wants to participate in all the existing structures and organizations that the western countries are using to reach their stability and to achieve peace and security world wide. In this way Spain will continue improving its participation in NATO, WEU, EU and OSCE as the main organizations in Europe to maintain a common security and defense policy.

At the same time Spain will try to get all kind of treaties, policies and agreements from these organizations and the southern rim of the Mediterranean sea, mainly the Maghreb countries, because the security of Spain is closely linked to these nations. Every problem that these countries face, has an immediate reaction on Spanish soil. All the European groups working in Mediterranean policies have Spanish representation and in many cases Spanish leadership.

However, it is right to say that the economy is the dominant domestic issue from 1996 in Spain and for this reason it is facing hard choices in:

- Reducing unacceptable levels of unemployment and growing public debt
- Stimulating economic growth and prosperity
- Maintaining social services and pension without adding to the tax burden

Spain is straining to meet the "convergence criteria" that the Maastricht Treaty sets for admission to the single European currency union to be decided this year, 1998. As a result, Spanish people think that Europe will close out the century with economic problems severely constraining its ability to update defense assets and build new structures to fill the post-Cold War security environment.

On the last point, Spanish thinking is that the US should continue to stay engaged in Europe and should share with the European countries the burden of world responsibility. Europe and the US are deeply bound by the ties of common values, long alliances of through history, culture and common ancestry. In security matters, America's oldest, most reliable partners are European countries. NATO can be understood as an outgrowth of this community of these values and these interests.

5,764 Words

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