

# Agreement for freedoms and against terrorism

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On December 8, 2000, the Popular Party and the Socialist Party lay down, with this agreement, the bases of a common policy for the Basque Country.

«The Popular Party and the Spanish Socialist Workers Party, determined to strengthen their unity to make freedoms fully effective and end terrorism, understand that it is their responsibility before Spanish society to adopt the following Agreement:

ETA's return to terrorist violence, after the temporary cessation announced in September 1998, has dramatically highlighted the situation in the Basque Country. With this, the failure of the strategy promoted by the PNV and by EA, which abandoned the Pact of Ajuria Enea in order, in agreement with ETA and EH, to put a political price on the abandonment of violence has also become clear. That price consisted of the imposition of self-determination to reach the independence of the Basque Country.

ETA's strategy could not be more obvious: they try to generalize fear to get citizens and institutions to desist from their principles, ideas and rights and thus achieve their objectives that, due to minority, excluding and xenophobic, would never be able to break through with the rules of democracy.

The definitive abandonment, by means of a formal rupture, of the Estella Pact and of the organizations created by it, by both parties, PNV and EA, constitutes an evident and necessary condition for the reincorporation of these political forces into the unity framework of the parties. democracy to combat terrorism. The full recovery of that unity to fight against terrorism must be carried out around the Constitution and the Statute of Guernica, a meeting place for the vast majority of Basque citizens.

Likewise, the rupture of the Estella Pact and the abandonment of its organizations constitutes, for the Popular Party and the Socialist Party, an essential requirement to reach any political agreement or institutional pact with the Basque Nationalist Party and Eusko Alkartasuna.

From the agreement on the diagnosis and the political consequences derived from it, the Popular Party and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party want to make explicit, before the Spanish people, our firm resolution to defeat the terrorist strategy, using all means to do so. that the rule of law places at our disposal.

We also want to strengthen our unity to defend the right of the Basques, that of all Spaniards, to live in peace and freedom anywhere in our country.

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## AGREEMENT

**1.** Terrorism is a State problem. It is the responsibility of the Government of Spain to direct the fight against terrorism, but combating terrorism is a task that corresponds to all democratic political parties, whether they are in the Government or in the opposition. We express our will to eliminate from the scope of the legitimate political or electoral confrontation between our two parties the policies to end terrorism.

**two.** Violence is morally abhorrent and radically incompatible with the exercise of democratic political action. Those who practice it, those who threaten the lives of those who do not think like them, only deserve the condemnation and contempt of the democratic political parties and society as a whole. There is no political objective that can be legitimately claimed in a democracy through coercion or assassination. The only democratic deficit suffered by Basque society, the real conflict, is that those who do not believe in democracy exercise terrorist violence to impose their objectives on the majority. For this reason, the PP and the PSOE commit ourselves to working so that any attempt at direct or indirect political legitimization of violence disappears. For that also,

**3.** During more than two decades of democracy, the Basque people have developed their capacity for self-government within the framework of the Constitution and the Statute of Guernica. This framework has allowed the political, cultural and social expression of the plurality that Basque society harbors. Any existing political discrepancy between Basques can and should be raised within that institutional framework. Any political project, even those that seek to review the institutional framework itself, must respect the rules and procedures established therein. The dialogue typical of a democratic society must take place between the legitimate representatives of the citizens, within the framework and with the rules provided for in our Constitution and Statute and, of course, without the pressure of violence. Peace,

**4.** The defense of human rights and public liberties corresponds, in the first place, to the State Security Forces and Corps as a whole: Civil Guard, National Police Corps and, within their scope, the Ertzaintza. The eradication in the Basque Country and in the rest of Spain of violence, threats and blackmail by terrorists and those who support them depends on its capacity and effectiveness. For this reason, we reiterate our confidence in their work and we will support their adequate provision of human and material resources to carry out the work entrusted to them. It is a trust, support and commitment that we want to extend to Judges and Prosecutors, to all those who work in the service of Justice to ensure our free and peaceful coexistence.

**5.** The crimes of terrorist organizations are particularly serious and reprehensible because they seek to subvert the democratic order and spread fear among all citizens. Our penal system offers an adequate legal response to repress these crimes. However, if new criminal forms or attitudes and behaviors that objectively constitute collaboration or incitement to terrorism require legal reforms, we undertake to promote them within the framework of mutual agreement.

Prison policy is part of the strategy of persecution against terrorist gangs and, therefore, falls within the framework of an agreement between both parties and with the Government. Within our legal system, prison legislation must be applied ensuring the most complete and severe punishment for those convicted of terrorist acts. The penitentiary policy will contemplate the forms of reintegration of those who leave the terrorist organization and show unequivocal attitudes of repentance and a desire for resocialization, as established by our Constitution.

**6.** The experience of police actions has repeatedly shown the importance of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The parties signing this Agreement commit to working to strengthen new cooperation initiatives, particularly with France and within the framework of the European Union. To this end, both parties believe it is necessary to maintain a permanent informative activity, on an international scale, in the sphere of institutions and political and citizen organizations.

**7.** The victims of terrorism are our main concern. They are the ones who have most directly suffered the consequences of fanaticism and intolerance. We know that democracy will never be able to give them back what they have lost, but we are ready for them to receive the recognition and attention of Spanish society. The Law of Solidarity with the Victims of Terrorism has been a unanimous and qualified expression of its moral and material recognition. But our obligations are not over.

We must strive to preserve his memory, to establish a daily and permanent care system. Their collaboration with Spanish society in the battle against terrorism continues to be necessary since there is no one better than the victims to defend the values of coexistence and mutual respect that those who have inflicted such suffering on them want to destroy.

To promote this collaboration, both parties commit to promoting, together with the victims' associations, the creation of a Foundation in which said associations are represented, which will coordinate its activities with the already existing foundations.

**8.** But the definitive eradication of terrorist violence in Spain is not an exclusive task of democratic political parties. It requires the active commitment of all, institutions, governments and citizens in the constant affirmation of civic and democratic values. PP and PSOE reaffirm their determination to promote and support the mobilization of citizens against terrorist violence and in repudiation of the murderers. Both parties express their support for the media and the professionals who work in them and underline the importance of their role in transmitting the values that guarantee coexistence among Spaniards and that appear in our Constitution.

Freedom of expression and informative pluralism constitute an essential democratic heritage in the face of coercion, threats and the imposition of silence sought by the murderers and their accomplices. In this Agreement, we want to appeal especially to young people. They are the ones who must lead, in a unique way, the rebellion against violence. It is to them that it corresponds mainly to extend the ethics of democratic values and coexistence. ETA must lose all hope. And that hope will be lost with the firm, united and democratic response of the Basque citizens and of all Spaniards to each of their vile actions.

Our commitment is to put all our energy as democratic parties in Spain, and particularly in the Basque Country, to achieve a great civic impulse at the service of safeguarding the freedoms and rights of all citizens. This is not a temporary commitment. We want to give our agreement effectiveness of the present and projection in the future. To this end, we will work together so that the values and principles embodied in this agreement achieve maximum social and institutional support, in which both parties commit to defending them.

**9.** The objective of this agreement, jointly promoting freedoms and the policy against terrorism, requires permanent collaboration between the Popular Party and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, which implies the exchange of information, concerted action in the areas included in the this Agreement - legislative reforms, penitentiary policy, international cooperation, citizen mobilization and institutions - and the search for joint positions in the face of all events that affect anti-terrorist policy. To this end, a monitoring commission will be created that will meet periodically and that will include representatives of both political forces and, with the agreement of the Government, representatives of the latter.

**10.** With the signing of this PP and PSOE agreement we want to publicly ratify our firm commitment to work together, to defend the right to life and freedom of all Spanish citizens. Both political formations agree on the principles that should inspire the fight against terrorism and, in the terms set out here, on the policy that should be developed.

Finally, we want to call on the other democratic forces to share these principles and this policy, convinced as we are that they are an adequate channel to express their will to collaborate in the objective of eradicating the scourge of terrorism».

**In Madrid, on December 8, 2000**