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José María de Areilza & José Ignacio Torreblanca

TO: JOSÉ LUIS RODRÍGUEZ ZAPATERO
FROM: JOSÉ MARÍA DE AREILZA & JOSÉ IGNACIO TORREBLANCA

Dear Mr. President, have you thought about the foreign policy legacy you will leave behind? What will it be? Unless you go on to enjoy a third term, your time in office will amount to eight years, long enough to make your mark. What would you like to be remembered for, inside and outside of Spain? Is there anything of which you feel especially proud? In the future, people will talk about the withdrawal of troops from Iraq as a key moment in Spanish foreign policy under you. But, what will remain? The Alliance of Civilizations? The substantial increase in development assistance? The refusal to recognise Kosovo? With less than three years remaining before your second term comes to an end, we think that this is a good time to take stock, both in terms of policy content and coherence, as well as to modestly offer some ideas.

You are a convinced Europhile, but what mark will you leave on the European Union? Will there be a policy or initiative with which you are forever associated? Take the cases of your two predecessors: Felipe González signed the Acts of Accession to the (then) Treaties of the European Communities, bestowing Spaniards with European citizenship, along with the Structural and Cohesion Funds, and managing in addition to situate Spain in a privileged position close to the Franco-German axis. In the international arena, he won the NATO referendum after a tough fight with his own electorate, was able to organise the Madrid Peace Conference on the Middle East, created the system of Latin American Summits, and brought about an EU Mediterranean policy which changed the relationship with Morocco and Algeria. Under his European Presidency in 1989 and 1995, Spain shone brightly on the world stage. These achievements culminated in Bill Clinton putting forward Foreign Minister Javier Solana for NATO Secretary General at the end of his second Administration, whilst González himself went on to reject offers to become President of the European Commission. Even today, 10

years after leaving office, Gonzalez is a stand-out European figure, something demonstrated by Sarkozy's proposal that he chair the Reflection Group on the Future of Europe, which will present its findings under the Spanish Presidency in 2010.

His successor, José María Aznar, not only surprised his European partners by ensuring that Spain was able to join the Euro on its own merits (going on to comply with the convergence criteria, which neither France nor Germany were able to manage); he also strengthened Spain's position in the EU thanks to the Treaty of Nice, maintained the country as a net recipient of Structural Funds in the face of very difficult circumstances, drove forward the package of economic reforms (the so-called Lisbon Agenda) and made a significant contribution to developing judicial and police cooperation in the European arena. Whether one likes it or not, it is obvious that Aznar managed to establish a privileged relationship with Washington, giving Spain world presence. Moreover, during Aznar's time in office, and thanks in part to his privatization policies, Spanish business went global. His vice-president Rodrigo Rato was also called on to carry out an important international role at the head of the IMF in recognition of the economic success of his two governments when they came to an end.

PATIENT'S RECORD.

It is still too early to take stock in your case, but it has to be recognised that your achievements in foreign policy are somewhat more vague. Your first term of office (2004-2008) was a strange one; the change of course which you sought to establish with respect to Aznar's foreign policy was thwarted. First of all, in spring 2005, the refusal by French and Dutch voters to ratify the European Constitution blew a hole in the return to "the heart of Europe" which you

had set out as a priority. The constitutional stasis seized up and divided the continent vis-a-vis Washington, as well as paralysing wider enlargement commitments. The subsequent exit of Chirac and Schröder from the stage (substituted by Sarkozy and Merkel) left you as the only witness of the clash with Bush over Iraq. Unexpectedly, Bush was re-elected in November 2004, turning tensions with Washington into something structural. Although in this second stage White House foreign policy smoothed over some of the most visible cracks, and the neo-cons left through the back-door, the truth is that the gap between Washington and Madrid remained unbridgeable. It is also evidently the case that domestic affairs weighed heavily on your agenda and action in the international arena just wasn't a priority during your first term in office.

Many of us thought that your re-election in 2008 would open a second, much more active period, above all when the immense opportunity offered by the victory of Obama is taken into consideration, not to mention Sarkozy and Merkel's rescue of the European Constitution from stasis at the Lisbon Summit of 2007 (although they hadn't reckoned on the Irish stubbornness which put the European project on the back-burner again in June 2008). All things considered, the main threat is the recession. We are well aware that in light of the highly serious nature of the economic crisis, your inner circle will be advising you to forget about foreign policy and concentrate on fixing the economy. We understand the logic of those who make that argument, but we think it is a mistake. The experience surrounding Spain's participation in the G-20 summit shows more than ever before to what extent the line between foreign and domestic policy has dissolved, that the crisis is being addressed both from within and also beyond national borders, and to offer your home town in Leon solutions for the future means spending a lot of time outside of Spain.

If the definition of success is the capacity to achieve the objectives which we set out for ourselves (not those which other people assign to us), and we put to one side for a minute personal preferences, it is clear that both González and Aznar enjoyed a great deal of success; they set out goals for their term in office and, to a great extent, they achieved them. You have also set yourself a number of objectives, although we feel that to date you haven't managed to realise them satisfactorily, which leads us to suggest you go back to them and possibly change or re-orientate some of them.

The first of these is Europe. You have a great opportunity now: the European Presidency in the first semester of 2010 will take place at a crucial moment. The Old Continent is disorientated and divided over the economic crisis, and has still to resolve its institutional problems. This is

a unique opportunity for somebody willing to invest the time and political capital, travelling from here to there in order to secure commitments, persuade, negotiate and launch initiatives. You are young, you could aspire to a European career afterwards.

The problem is that your programme for the presidency contains numerous proposals in many different areas, but lacks a personal stamp. You say you want to carry out a "transformational presidency", rather than just keep things ticking over. But as it stands at present, the plan looks like the sum total of all the ideas and demands of many departments and actors, rather than the product of a clear and ordered overall vision. Bear in mind besides that the agenda of the Presidency doesn't include unforeseen events, which might include a world financial crisis or a war on European soil (as befell Sarkozy with Georgia). Mr President, as the French leader showed all too well, Europe is made using your head, but also through sheer guts and instinct. None of what has been done up until now is due to anything other than the will of those who have done it.

Another of your big initiatives is the Alliance of Civilizations. Beyond some problems in concept and design which have both been pointed out often enough, the fact is that Obama's arrival at the White House has had a notable impact on this initiative. In his interview with Al Yazira, his messages to Iran and appearance before the Turkish Parliament, Obama pronounced words of respect and non-confrontation so in keeping with the Alliance that, paradoxically, they tend to make it unnecessary. Washington has demonstrated that it can talk straight to the Muslim world, conveying the right message, something which tends to push the role of Spain into the background. So while it is true that Obama has partly ratified your vision of the world, for that very reason the initiative is now no longer as necessary in the terms it was set out. The problem is a different one now – the erosion of the idea of the universal nature of human rights. If the presence of Bush justified the Alliance, his absence has to have consequences too. Having seen what took place in Geneva at the Conference on Racism and the problems which the human rights agenda faces (including some very worrying threats to freedom of speech by means of proposals to limit it in the shape of the crime of the defamation of religion), it might be a good idea to think through your idea again and put it to work rescuing the universal nature of human rights and the idea of religious tolerance.

Your third big sphere of activity is related to the fight against poverty. Under your leadership, development assistance has grown very substantially, placing Spain amongst the leading pack of donor countries. That is a notable achievement and it should be strengthened and consolidated so that any change in the political colours of

the day will not lead to a set-back. It is right for a modern country to understand prosperity as also implying responsibility, which is why our Scandinavian neighbours, who you admire so much, consider development aid a cross-party issue. However, in this case, it isn't quite clear that the increase in the development budget has been accompanied by a clear strategy detailing where, how and in what to invest. Often we complain about the capacity of recipients to absorb development assistance; but on many occasions, Spain has given the impression that the problem lies with donors who don't know how to spend.

The experts say that the quality of the aid could still be improved and, above all, in order to guarantee it is used efficiently, a more active strategy geared to greater presence in multilateral organisations is required. It isn't so much about demanding something in return in terms of national interest, although undoubtedly development assistance constitutes an element of foreign policy and, well managed, will always lead to something coming back, but instead being committed to the criteria of aid effectiveness and quality.

Finally, you have shown a clear inclination towards multilateralism, which is to say, towards the UN, taking your faith in international law to extremes we think simply cannot be justified. If Europe seems more improbable each day, the UN looks simply impossible. At one time, international law was a progressive force, protecting new, recently decolonised States, and guaranteeing access to the institutions of global governance to the smallest and weakest. Today, however, it is an organisation which has turned into a dinosaur, a barrier at the service of those who don't want change, a legacy of the last century, established on veto rights based on nuclear weapons, forced to witness impassively as all kinds of tyrants and human rights violators seize its institutions, incapable of governing the world we live in and obliged to accept its own replacement by institutions like the G-20. If you really like the UN so much, then change it! Get involved in its reform. Who knows? You might end up being the first Spanish Secretary General, in the finest tradition of Salvador de Madariaga and the League of Nations. Once again, however, you won't achieve anything without Europe.

DIAGNOSIS

All of these problems are complicated and as such have no easy answer. However, we think that your Government would be better placed to deal with them if some of the following things we now go on to mention were taken into consideration, and which taken together, constitute a diagnosis of what isn't working, something at the very

least worth discussing in our opinion. In their essence, these are classical problems which have everything to do with means and ends and the relation between the two. Let's see why.

1. Lack of strategy

Sometimes your policies come with great idealistic and regulatory baggage, such as when you launch or get behind big initiatives (the Alliance against Hunger and the Alliance of Civilizations), defend the legitimacy of institutions such as the UN, or promote Turkey's membership of the European Union. In all of these cases, it is obvious that your policy goes beyond a narrow vision of national interest and is located in the sphere of principles. Your speech at the Prado Museum at the beginning of this term in which you presented the case for a "committed foreign policy" and made patent your commitment to the moratorium on the death penalty is a good example of what we mean.

However, on other occasions you have revealed great doses of pragmatism, such as when you insisted on a seat at the G-20 using arguments based on pure and simple economic weight; when moving closer to China or Russia for trade reasons, putting to one side their disastrous human rights record; when supporting Spanish companies abroad in their disputes with foreign governments; maintaining official development assistance to countries which do not deserve consideration on the basis of national income, but which fall into our sphere of influence; or when adding your voice to those who want to maintain a high level of agricultural protection within the European Union; or, finally, deploying our diplomacy in Sub-Saharan Africa, origin of the makeshift immigrant boats which cause so much unease in Spanish public opinion.

On other occasions, your foreign policy has taken on an excessively ideological colouring, or seems dominated by domestic electoral considerations or party politics, such as your break with European and NATO allies over Afghanistan or Kosovo, or the artificial prolongation of the rift with the USA. You have carried out a more left-wing and orthodox foreign policy in comparison to Felipe González. However, your second term and the arrival of Obama might offer a good chance to focus your diplomacy more, doubtless helping to increase its repercussion and reach into the future. Is this mixture the result of a strategy, or only the sum of its not quite coherent parts? Strangely enough, Spain has drafted sector wide plans (Africa Plan, Asia Plan), but lacks an (official) vision of the whole. For that reason, all too often foreign policy is the consequence

of what is being done elsewhere, and decisions are taken in response to events, rather than being their cause. In the same way, the absence of coordination between different departments of your Government is accepted all too naturally, (even with a degree of fatalism). In a normal day of foreign affairs activity, the Ministry of Trade defends a liberal position at the Doha Round, as the Ministry of Agriculture defends the Common Agricultural Policy to the death in the EU, the Secretary of International Cooperation drives forward food security policies, thus contradicting the aforementioned, at the same time as the Ministries of Defence and the Foreign Office act without coordinating or even informing each other with respect to changes of policy in places where there are Spanish troops deployed (like Afghanistan, Kosovo or Lebanon). All of this without overlooking the Minister of Justice and the Home Office, or the Ministry of Work and Social Security, which also carry out their own activities beyond Spanish borders. But politics is not just about the "science of muddling through" as Lindblom popularised in his classic analysis of public policies, but rather the capacity to anticipate events and influence them. The difference is important: what took place around the G-20 is no doubt a fine example of the consequences of an absence of a clear strategy. Foreign policy becomes reactive, if not merely intuitive.

Anybody listening to you regularly, to your Foreign Minister or other senior foreign policy figures knows the priorities off by heart: "Europe, followed by Latin America, then the Maghreb and the Middle East, not forgetting Asia naturally, and paying special attention to the African continent of course". Is that realistic? Do the will and the means exist to sustain five priorities in five continents, besides the inevitable global issues (security and disarmament, poverty and climate change...)? Hasn't the time come to set out more specific objectives, discussing where the added value lies, and putting energy into achieving those selected?

2. Lack of resources

Our diagnosis starts out from a very simple idea - the 'what' depends on the 'how'; a large part of the problem in terms of defining goals is related to the 'how' of foreign policy making. It may seem like stating the obvious, but Spanish democracy already has a number of years international experience in a multilateral and European context, and its position in the world is important enough for the country's citizens to know at first hand what the foreign policy priorities and objectives are, as well as what resources are available for their attainment. For too many years now, overseas departments have been asked to make

up for a shortfall in resources with extra zeal and effort.. The reality is that Spain doesn't have the means required to attain ambitious goals. During the transition it had to travel very far, very fast, and make do much of the time with what it had in order to bring the country up to scratch and reach a state of normality. But that was achieved almost ten years ago. With the entrance into the Euro, nobody casts any doubts on Spain's international role now as a medium-sized power with an important, global asset in the shape of Spanish culture.

Nothing will be achieved without a strengthened Foreign Ministry, and not just with more money for aid. It must be able to coordinate the other ministries with more effectiveness. For that to occur, it has to be modernised, the professional training for diplomatic service thoroughly reformed, including the entrance requirements, and above all, proper management of human resources needs to be introduced. Posts in Madrid ought to be paid better and a greater degree of specialisation (especially linguistic) is required in diplomats, as well as continual training in the workplace. There is a need for more people thinking and planning, while fewer should be reacting and dealing with what is urgent. Without the depoliticisation of the majority of the ambassadorial posts, and other high ranking appointments, it will be well-nigh impossible for the Ministry to work with a sense of esprit-de-corps and provide Spanish diplomacy with continuity.

3. Outstanding tasks

Besides means and ends, we think the Spanish Government must be stronger and more consistent in defending its principles. That requires talking about one of the big outstanding tasks which falls to us - the promotion of democracy and human rights, an element which no advanced nation can neglect in its foreign policy today.

You have defined yourself often as a republican, in the sense that word is used in political theory, and in keeping with Petit, your philosopher of choice, your idea of freedom lies in the absence of domination. You admire Kofi Annan, that's why you chose him to introduce you in your conference on foreign policy at the beginning of this term. You are also considered a firm defender of international legality, but that not only consists of a respect for the sovereignty of States and non-interference in their internal affairs; human rights are also a matter of international law. And yet, one of the things which is most striking about Spanish foreign policy for a country with an authoritarian past of its own is that it would seem to grant so little importance to promoting democracy and human rights.

Diplomacy, understood as the management of relations between sovereign States, is not the beginning and end of foreign policy for a democracy, not by a long way. In general, Spanish diplomats are very professional, though there aren't many of them, and they need far more resources and incentives. But it is a lot to ask of them that they connect with the citizens of other countries, learn to talk with the opposition of governments with which they are obliged to maintain excellent relations, without the appropriate training. It is an uncomfortable business, no easy task, and it means they have to live with a certain amount of tension in some bilateral relations. But to neglect this activity would mean a foreign policy which was deaf and blind, as well as one running against the grain of our principles: incidents like the refusal to talk with the Dalai Lama for fear of arousing Chinese irritation, or the reluctance to meet up with dissidents when in La Habana, must be overcome.

TREATMENT

1. Roll up your sleeves.

Your personal commitment is essential. The head of the Government in any given European country must dedicate half of his agenda to European and international affairs, and that is something we have missed on Spanish soil. If you want to achieve results in the next three years, you must really get personally involved in the issues, include European and international leaders in the intensive use of your mobile phone, dedicate a great deal of time to reading reports, and spend hours and hours talking and dealing with colleagues from other countries. You will need to transcend your status as an ideological reference, even an icon, for the left in other countries, and become an indispensable and reliable interlocutor at the big debates on global governance. Your foreign minister is a Sherpa, somebody who can help you reach the summits, but who won't go up in your place: dedication and sacrifice are part of the game. As they say in English, "no pain, no gain". A President today has no substitute. "Nothing is possible without men, nothing is lasting without institutions". The classic Monnet quote is truer today than ever. Not only do we live in a highly presidential country (not that you need reminding!), but also global governance itself has become more presidential. That is down to an institutional deficit which obliges Government leaders to personally lead the agenda of the big international institutions. Sometimes, such as the present, the weakness of the international system overlaps with a leadership deficit. The truth is that there is a shortfall of leaders in Europe; you took a step forward at an uncertain time and assumed the leadership of your own party when nobody gave you a hope. Surprise us again now!

The opportunities for leadership which will come thanks to Obama during the next three years are immense; obviously, you won't be able to take part in all of these and you'll have to choose wisely. But if you do so, and commit yourself in full, there is no reason to think Spain can't be in that group of countries which leads some of these initiatives. It isn't a question of altruism, as Felipe González showed when he supported (unexpectedly) Germany in some crucial decisions in NATO or during German unification - becoming more active can bring immense and very tangible rewards indeed (the Cohesion funds are the best example). So don't be conservative, take risks. We will criticise you when you do so, naturally; but seeing as we're in private and nobody else is going to read this report, we can tell you that on average, political analysts get it right no more often than the politicians whose decisions they analyse. Look at the case of one of your colleagues, Sarkozy, subject to a great deal of criticism, but a politician who has undoubtedly imposed his own agenda on reality and drives it forward with a firm hand - a leader. Finally, act according to your principles, but not according to clichés or ideological prejudices. Both Felipe González and Obama offer good examples of how to make their own ideas and principles compatible with policies which seek cross-party consensus.

2. Europe, Europe

Stop talking about Europe and its institutions as something out there, beyond Spain's borders. Europe is you as well. We are moving towards a multipolar world, yes, that is common place enough these days; but if we carry on like this, there isn't going to be a European pole in that multipolar order. The Spanish presidency of 2010 is about to begin and everything indicates that it will take place at a difficult time in which the world recession will continue to undermine confidence in governments and also within the EU. Likewise, it is far from certain that the Presidency is going to take place with the Treaty of Lisbon ratified. If it has been, the challenge will be to start putting the new policies it introduces into place, many of which are the result of delicate compromises between States.

The 27 state Europe doesn't work at the level of foreign policy. But the solution does not lie in a return to bilateralism and the attempt to establish privileged relations with Russia, China and the USA that you and other member States have made moves to do. You must do all you can to ensure that the European External Action Service comes into being as soon as possible and has the adequate means at its disposal to ensure Europe acts as such in the world. And also of course for the European defence pillar to become a reality, which does not necessarily mean spending

more, but instead spending more wisely, enhancing coordination with our partners. Our recommendation is that you immediately put your mind to developing a European foreign policy treaty allowing States to integrate more closely if they so want to in the event that the Lisbon Treaty should come unstuck again in Ireland.

Ask yourself how the Old Continent is going to emerge from the recession - strengthened or weakened? And what can you do in that sense, in Europe and beyond its borders? The bolstering of European economic governance is without any doubt the issue of the day, but it requires greater centralisation of power in Brussels and you won't be able to muster consensus from all your partners, not even those in the Euro zone. There are some interesting proposals on the table (the creation of a European treasury, the establishment of a European bond market, the merging of market regulators, the reform of the Lisbon Agenda), but nobody wants to assume the cost of leading these proposals. You will be the only clearly left-wing European leader, which means life will not be easy for you, but Spain has always had a centre economic position and it has accumulated a good stock of pro-European capital, so look for niches and select a few issues (there are too many priorities in the current presidency agenda for there to be any single one).

Outside of Europe, the enlargement process is paralysed, which affects not only Turkey, but also the Balkans. Is it true that you believe in enlargement? Then engage with the issue. If that is how things are, be consistent and begin to design the budgetary and institutional package which will make it possible to increase the European Union to 35 members in 2020. In 1997, Agenda 2000 was drafted to prepare for enlargement. If you don't push forward something similar yourself during your presidency, people will think that your support for the Balkans and Turkey is no more than rhetoric. Maybe after talking with France, Germany and others you ascertain that Turkish membership is simply impossible; it might be worth while in that case to lead the design and execution of a Plan B, a special accession statute for those countries which do not want or are unable to become full members. Who knows? The United Kingdom might buy into the idea when (as is expected) the Conservatives win the next general election, and the model could possibly be applied to Ukraine and others.

Take advantage of the 2010 presidency to provide a sense of balance in terms of your role in the Balkans. Despite what you seem to think, Serbia and Spain share no parallels at all, so don't waste unnecessary friendliness. In fact, next year will be a good time to recognise Kosovo,

with equal amounts of pragmatism and Europeanism, when the issue of Croatia and Serbia's entrance is raised. If you don't want it to become a precedent for Spain's case, then don't turn it into one through your eccentric stance. The genocide and ethnic cleansing which took place in Kosovo and led to self-determination haven't occurred in our country. Spanish nationalism and Serb nationalism have nothing in common. Put another way, our Basque Socialists and Conservatives so often persecuted by an ethnic nationalism based on blood and race are the people who have every right to feel themselves Kosovar. So the sooner that Spain leaves the Pro-Serbian club made up by Russia, Slovakia, Rumania and Greece, the better. Don't be Belgrade's best friend in exchange for nothing, or if you still want to, get something back in return (such as credit for handing over war criminal Mladic, or the acceptance of the EULEX mission). If you had joined in with the consensus at the time of independence, the big countries (USA, France, United Kingdom, Germany) would owe you a favour, but as things stand, you owe them for breaking the European consensus, so settle your debts just as soon as you can.

All things considered, maybe Europe looks like an impossible task to you. And maybe you're right to see it that way. An expanded Union, one subject to unanimity when it comes to reforming itself, a highly weakened European Commission, and a number of States which are fundamentally liberal and conservative in outlook; maybe that isn't the best scenario in the world after all. Perhaps there are others you'd like to explore, more multilateral, like climate change or poverty. Be warned here and now, however, that the difficulties you will encounter in each of these issues will make those you come across in Europe pale in comparison and, what is worse, without Europe's explicit support, you won't be able to achieve anything in these areas.

3. Frankness with Obama

Be true to yourself with the new US President, don't try to please him, set out your own vision of the world. You don't like how NATO handles its relations with Russia? Tell him so. He'll probably pay attention to what you have to say. The Alliance needs to change a lot; try to lead it forward. Barack Obama is a very good listener, and he isn't superficial in the slightest. He has moved towards the centre, like any President of that nation with so many conservative features. As seen on his first visit to Europe, Obama doesn't even have Clinton's personal connection with the Old Continent and, deep down, he doesn't expect much from this side of the Atlantic, but he's willing to be nice to us and makes us feel good.

With Spain's experience in renewable energies and high speed rail, there are important business opportunities to be won. Ask yourself, besides, what Paris would do if there were more than forty million French speakers in the USA? Promote a policy towards the Hispanic elites, geared both to reconnecting them with their roots and making their integration in the USA even more successful.

You have said that "Spain is not in favour, nor is it going to be, of an increase in troops in Afghanistan". That statement doesn't make much sense. But if that is really your philosophy, you must be coherent and withdraw and look for an alternative arena to deploy. We are either in Afghanistan for reasons of national interest (if we feel there is a direct threat to our security, i.e., the Atocha bombings) or owing to our international commitments. In both cases, the policy must be rational and consistent, and troop numbers should go up or down based on the objectives. If security in the Spanish zone increases, then some troops can be withdrawn. But what if the Taliban frustrate the mission? Then the Spanish contingent will have to be bolstered. This is quite normal, and perfectly understandable for most people. Establishing a ceiling is a repeat at the local level of the same mistake made in limiting numbers to 3.000. The recommendation of the best strategists like Michael Porter when positioning oneself in a market, or a map of the world, is not to make the mistake of "ending up trapped in the middle" when faced with two clear alternatives, and that is what could happen to Spain in Afghanistan. For this very reason, get involved in everything going on there or pull out, but don't try and go unnoticed.

4. Take sides in Latin America. Distribution of Spanish aid in Haiti.

After five years of foreign policy under your government, the question is still 'who do we support?' Latin America is so divided down the middle that it looks as fragile as Spain did in the nineteen seventies. In its fight for economic, political and social modernisation, some have fallen into dogmatism, others have made progress thanks to pragmatism. Obama, in any event, has stripped the populists of their anti-American rhetoric at one stroke. Spain must take the next step.

Madrid should serve as a good example of what can be achieved with a grand consensus, and ought to help both Latin American Right and Left to reach inclusive compromises. For that to be the case, it needs to be criti-

cal, takes sides, denounce excesses, and not settle for the role of bland fairy godmother, or understanding mother country. How can it be the case that the Commonwealth is more critical of its members (look at the case of Zimbabwe) when they have far fewer cultural ties between them than we do with Latina America? What do we advise in this regard? Take sides, make yourself a reference for the moderate centre-left through long hours of work. Create the possibility of the PP and PSOE doing in Latin America today what the German foundations did in Spain in the nineteen seventies. It is true that the two regional leaders, Mexico and Brazil, need Spain increasingly less, but for that very reason you should get involved as much as you can in order to stay close to those two countries. Don't forget that Spanish culture is the main asset that Spanish foreign policy has, and the majority of Spanish speakers have soft accents.

In Cuba, stay close to three key sectors – the army, the church and the dissident movement, and prepare a "Latin American transition" with other countries of the Southern Hemisphere, based on the moderate majority and the reconciliation of the two halves of the country. Keep a firm and equal distance from each side in such a way that within 10 years the Cuban people feel gratitude, rather than indifference or rancour, towards Spain. And that goes for all of Latin America, where Madrid must be a reference of the highest order, not only because of its common culture or economic presence, but because of democratic values.

5. Forget the Middle East

It will be difficult for you to accept this, but despite Minister Moratinos being one of the great specialists in this area, we recommend that you forget about the Middle East, the Barcelona Process and the Union for the Mediterranean. Too many years of bilateral European failure have gone by not to have learned the lesson that only through a strong EU will there be a strong policy in the region. In the Middle East, Spain's interests are indistinguishable from the interests of Europe, so the work has to consist of strengthening European policy.

From the point of view of Spain's interests, the problem is the relationship with Morocco and Algeria (and the relation between them). Here you certainly do have a role to play, and civil society even more so, through economic, professional and social exchange. Morocco is to Spain what Mexico is to the USA, and Madrid is now important enough to lead a radical transformation of the relationship between the EU and Morocco on the

basis of interdependence and mutual opening (in fact, you are already doing this, so carry on in the same vein). In your dealings with the Maghreb, therefore, you not only have to strengthen the "colchón de intereses" (cushion of mutual interest) which has been created over these years, favouring ties with emerging civil society there, but also demonstrate in practice (and with Moroccan immigrants in Spain too) that your Government is capable of managing interdependency. A future of free trade with Morocco and complete liberalisation of investments wouldn't be bad at all, but managing it requires boldness.

6. There are no ends without means

We fear that the Government has once more abandoned the reform of the Foreign Service, despite including it in the election manifesto and beginning the process during the last parliament - only to hurry it to a conclusion in the face of the avalanche of problems it generated. Reforming the Foreign Service requires the Minister to travel less, negotiate with other members of the cabinet and compromise himself politically, but it is essential. Your current Foreign Minister doesn't have the same excuse his predecessors enjoyed – that they hadn't spent sufficient time in the Ministry – not on this occasion..

All the governments of the day tinkered with the institutions of foreign policy, putting together and taking apart the Consejo de Política Exterior (Foreign Policy Council), changing organigrams, and altering the allocation of responsibilities. The Ministry of Defence, the Foreign Ministry and the President's cabinet in Moncloa all have small departments of their own for analysis and planning which, although they coordinate informally, do not do so permanently. Isn't it time to think in the long term? Spain is an important country, with an international standing of its own in the world. And you, Mr President, can have the very best analysis on the world in which we live at your fingertips each morning, highlighting how Spain is affected by events, and what options are on the table. But for that, you have to accept the need for team-work, surround yourself with people who provide complementary points of view, even contradictory positions to your own, meet frequently with your advisors to evaluate problems and their possible solutions openly and without any preconceptions. Resources to carry out policies and get beyond mere rhetoric are also required. That's why we recommend an independent commission draft a document examining the world today, its overarching tendencies, its challenges,

the objectives to be met, and the means available for the task at hand. At the end of the day, most of the countries around us carry out similar analysis regularly, call them national security strategies or something similar, detailing objectives (European, Atlantic or multilateral) and also priority geographic areas and global issues. Do you want to leave a first rate foreign policy behind as part of your legacy? It is still within your reach.

Dirección de origen:

<http://www.fp-es.org/diagnostico-diferencial-politica-exterior>

José María de Areilza is Dean of IE Law School and Jean Monnet-Chair. Former advisor for European and US affairs with President Aznar, and contributor to ABC.

José Ignacio Torreblanca is Head of ECFR Madrid office in Madrid. He teaches at UNED and is a regular columnist for El País.