



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



Natolin

**Speech by Mr Alberto NAVARRO
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Rector of the College of Europe, Friends and Colleagues,

It's a great honour for me to be here today, in this campus of the College of Europe in Natolin, one of the best symbols of excellence, I think, in the European Union. As you know, the College of Europe is very closely linked to Spain. It was a great European and Spaniard, Salvadore Madariaga who, probably after the last civil war among Europeans, the Second World War, addressing the Hague Congress in 1948 launched the idea of creating this College, where different students and university graduates from Europe could study and live together. As Javier Solana, who is a relative of Salvatore Madariaga and with whom I've been working for many years, first as Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs and later as High Representative for Common Foreign Security Policy and the Secretary General to the Council put it, in both campuses we have a microcosm of what Europe is about: living together, learning from each other and building together common European future.

I have come here today to talk to you about the Spanish vision of Europe. You know that last year Spain celebrated 20 years of its EU membership. We joined in January 1986, so we have taken advantage of this and throughout 2006 we held seminars and celebrations in Spain of this 20th anniversary. I often say that these 20 years in Europe – and many of you have had the privilege of being born already as Europeans – are probably the best

20 years in Spanish history. And we are a very old country, with a rich history, but I do not find in Spanish history books 20 years with so much political stability and economic prosperity which comes with political stability. Spain was a rather closed country, our foreign trade in 1985 amounted to less than 30% of our Gross Domestic Product of that time, we had unemployment of more than 20%, we had two-digit inflation, we had terrorism, with thousands of Spaniards being killed by terrorism. Spain was almost a developing country; we received our last loan from the World Bank as a developing country in 1980, a few years before joining the EU, and many people in Europe, as I still remember when I went to French or British universities, regarded Spain and Portugal in a very dismissive way. They were saying "Africa starts in the Pyrenees". This is the kind of perception that many Europeans had about Spain. Today, after 20 years in Europe, Spain is a completely different country. We are the 8th economy in the world; we are one of the most open economies in the world, probably number 4 or 5; our external trade – imports plus exports – account to almost 70% of our GDP (as compared to United States 40-42%, Brazil 30%), this is a figure of measuring the opening of our economy; we have a surplus in the public accounts. The largest bank in the euro zone is not Dutch, not French, not Italian – this is the Spanish bank Santander. We own the third biggest telecommunications company in the world – Telefonica – the largest in Europe, bigger than Deutsche Telecom or France Telecom or British Telecom. And last year we created more than 60% of the new jobs in the euro zone. Therefore a real success story.

We have received a lot from Europe in this twenty years. There is no other member state in Europe that has received so much solidarity from other member states as Spain. We have received an average 0.8 of our GDP every year from Brussels, from the Community budget or, in other words, from other citizens of Europe who, via the Community budget, have been funding our infrastructure or our environment. We have received a lot of solidarity, three times the Marshall Plan, during these years. That is good. It is good that that is known not only in Spain, but also outside Spain. But it is also true that the real

success is attributable mainly to the fact that Spanish society coped with the challenges and made the best of them, and the result is clearly a result of a cohesive movement of all Spaniards, all the political forces that have really grasped this opportunity that Europe opened to us.

At the same time, we have given a lot to Europe. Europe today cannot be understood without Spain. To talk about cohesion is to talk about Spanish initiatives in Europe. European citizenship was an initiative by Felipe Gonzales many years ago and today it is a reality, a European construction. The Lisbon Agenda was an initiative from Aznar and Blair, a Spanish-British initiative. The fight against terrorism, the Latin American dimension of the European Union, the Barcelona Process, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, Justice and Home Affairs, Common Policy on Immigration - in just two years Spain has put this new policy on the European Agenda. These are just a few examples where Spain and the Spaniards have put their fingerprint on the European construction. Well, this is history about the Spanish success story in European integration.

I want to talk to you about the present situation in Europe, which is a delicate one. I will also say a few words about the Spanish vision of the future of Europe. And what interests me above all is to listen to you also, to know about your concerns, your worries and how you see the future of Europe. It's true that we are in a moment of uncertainty. We could say that Europe is in a crisis, a deep crisis, or if not in a crisis, than in any case one could say we are at a crossroads, in a very important historical moment for Europe. We have done a lot in these twelve years since the Natolin College was established back in 1994. If you just take these 12 last years, you would see the impressive amount of achievements that the European integration process has achieved. We have had three new treaties negotiated and put into practice: the Maastricht Treaty, the Amsterdam Treaty, the Nice Treaty. And we have negotiated and signed also the Constitutional Treaty. We have had three enlargements: Austria, Sweden, Finland; then the ten new members including

Poland (where Spain was a keen supporter of these enlargements and of Polish accession, we look to Poland like a mirror and we see ourselves like Poles when we joined twenty years ago), and then the last enlargement, a few days ago, for Romania and Bulgaria, the second leg of that so called fifth enlargement. At the same time there were: the Single Market launched in 1992, immediately after the establishment of an Economic and Monetary Union; the establishment of the euro back in 2002 for three hundred million Europeans that have the privilege to use the common currency; the putting into operation of the European Security and Defence Policy from 1999, a common foreign and security policy with its defence element; the creation of a fair area of freedom, security, justice – justice in home affairs matters, just to name a few initiatives, historical ones, that we have achieved together as the Europeans during these last 12 years of this college. So, only since 1994 Europe has achieved three new treaties, three enlargements with fifteen new member states - when we were joining we were just twelve and today we are twenty seven member states, with almost 500 million citizens - the creation of the euro with the European Monetary Union, defence, foreign policy, justice and home affairs, immigration, and I could continue. So it's true that we have achieved a lot in last years but it's also true that many citizens have got the sensation that we are going too quickly. That in a globalised world many decisions are taken without understanding from their side, that things are going too fast. There is a kind of vertical feeling of an enlargement fatigue. They don't know where the boundaries are, what the European Union really is in terms of geography, in terms of decision-making. The feeling that there is a big bureaucracy in Brussels' taking decisions that are imposed on sovereign countries. So for many Europeans there is a feeling that there is too much Europe, that there should be less Community legislation, there should be more re-nationalisation of policies and that there should be stronger national identities. Well, I think, many of us in Spain think that this would be no way out it and that this would be a real disaster. So on the other hand, I think many more Europeans think otherwise: in a globalised world, in a more interdependent world, we need Europe more than ever. And to talk to you

about the future of Europe is to talk about ourselves. Today Europe, I say it frequently, is the oxygen we breathe, the air we breathe. Today we cannot understand our lives without Europe, without free movement, without the euro, without Erasmus, without colleges like this one. Almost half of our legislation comes through Brussels and in a globalised world we need more than ever a strong Europe that protects us, defends our interests, promotes our values and makes Europe one of the very few places in the world where there is stability, prosperity, and which is probably one of the best places to live in this complicated world of today.

I want to explain to you in a nutshell the kind of Europe we want from Spain and I hope this vision is shared more and more by other Europeans. We think we need above all a better Europe. One can summarise this vision of Europe in four points, so that I don't talk too much and listen to you also. The first one: I think we need a political Europe. At least from a Spanish perspective the internal market, free trade area, even the euro is not enough. We want a political Europe. We want a Europe that is a global actor, a global player. For many many centuries – many of you are too young to have experienced that – Europe has been above all a theatre of war. On many occasions we Europeans even exported wars to the rest of the world and created what the Chinese call “European civil wars” the world wars. In the last decades and thanks to the European integration process, Europe is no longer a theatre, no longer a spectator of what is happening in the world, and on many occasions we criticise the United States for taking initiatives in the Balkans, I have in mind Serbia, for launching war in Iraq and etc. We need not to be a theatre of war, of course, we need not to be a spectator – we need to be an actor, a player in the global world, with our values, which is really what has united us as Europeans and in this way affords better protection for European citizens inside and outside our borders. So, first of all, a political Europe, which speaks in this complicated world with one voice, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Javier Solana, and with the external diplomatic service. A political Europe, with common policies – which is really what gives

value added and makes the big difference between the European Union and organisations like free trade, EFTA or like traditional integration organisations Mercosur and dozens of similar organizations around the world. What makes unique the European Union is that we share sovereignty – nobody loses sovereignty in the European Union. This message that you may get, that Poland is losing its sovereignty if it joins the euro or European Union is a stupidity. On the contrary – you gain a lot sharing sovereignty with others and acting together in a world where you need to cope with many issues like climate change, like poverty in the Third World, like terrorism, like international crime, like immigration, like health, like employment, to do things together. Otherwise you are irrelevant in this complicated world. So, a political Europe with common policies, agriculture, cohesion, fisheries, environment, transport. This is really the substance, what gives the value to the European integration. Political Europe.

For the second, a Europe of values and principles. If there is something that united us as Europeans, if we have one day to define the European identity, it is the values and principles we share as Europeans. Abolition of the death penalty, freedom, democracy, tolerance – as Angela Merkel said two days ago in Strasbourg, tolerance is probably one of the best words to explain European values, respect for others precisely because they are different, may have a different religion, different race, different sex - tolerance, non-discrimination – which is a clear principle of the Community legislation – the rule of law, respect for human dignity. Just read the Article 2 and Article 3 of the European Constitution and you will get this catalogue of values and principles. And if there is one to be chosen, I would take as a sign of identity: solidarity. And we Spaniards, and now the Poles may be living examples of solidarity in the world in the coming years. I said it before, many Spaniards may not know that we are a member state that has received far more. I know of no other country in the history of mankind that has received so much, almost 1% of GDP every year through the Community budget. Net. And until now we Spaniards have been unable to devolve 0.4 to the Third World. And

we have been receiving 0.8 every year from Brussels. Poland will get almost up to 4% every year and may overtake Spain in a few years as an example of solidarity. Internal solidarity, inside the European Union, and this is one of the clear reasons for the success of European integration, because at the end, cohesion is good for all and makes us much stronger. And solidarity with the rest of the world. And we, Europeans, you know it well, are by far the biggest donor of humanitarian aid and of developing aid in the world. We Europeans account for 60% of all development aid of the world.

Therefore, a political Europe, a Europe of values and principles, of solidarity.

And third – a Europe of citizens. I think that Europe has no future if it is not built with its citizens. The concept of European citizenship is a Spanish initiative launched by Felipe Gonzales together with the Commission. I think it has elements almost revolutionary. It has been misunderstood on some occasions. The European citizenship doesn't detract anything from you. It just gives you additional rights and obligations. To explain it very briefly: as Spaniards, or as Poles, you have rights that are in your constitution but the right to move freely, to go to France, to Italy, to work there, to live there, to vote in the municipal elections or in the European elections in those countries is not given to you by the Polish constitution or by the Spanish constitution. In our case even the right to use euro as the common currency – no, this is an additional right that is given by Europe. And that makes us, the European citizens, probably the group of citizens in the world that enjoys the most and the better rights. We want to develop this concept of European citizenship, we think that in order to have a strong Europe we need to have the Europe not only of states but the Europe of states and of citizens, with this double legitimacy. And that's why it's good that in the Constitutional Treaty we have the Charter of Fundamental Rights, that adds rights to those which we have as a nationals of a member state, it is also good that we have the popular legislative initiative. With one million signatures of Europeans, when the Constitution is in force, we'll be able to ask for legislation in specific cases. And it is also good that we develop programs like Erasmus program that has

been a tremendous success. So far we have passed the figure of 2 million students who have been able to work or study for a part of their time in a university of a different member state. More than two hundred thousand Spaniards have enjoyed the Erasmus scholarships. And as you know to me, as a Spaniard, it is natural we are the member state that receives the biggest amount of Erasmus around the European Union who want to come to Spain. Well, this program should be extended to other areas because it has proved that it has value for many and that it really helps the European construction. So we should have Erasmus for professional training, we should have Erasmus for civil servants, for police, we should have Erasmus for the third age. In Spain we have a tremendously successful program that allows the retired people to go to hotels during the winter time, when the hotels were closed. They are no longer closed. Well, we should have a program like this at the European level. We have even elaborated it in Spain, we call it the holiday Ulysses program, allowing people from Poland to go in the winter time to Spain with a low cost airlines and Spaniards to come to visit Warsaw, Krakow... Well this may be a joke but it is not a joke, it's reality. Today we are at the crossroads of the crisis and it is not impossible that when we put this Ulysses program on the table people will be looking to other things, they will think this is not a priority but through initiatives like this, we have Erasmus like a good example, we build Europe. So, a Europe of citizens, on top of political Europe and a Europe of values. But in order to have that political Europe, the Europe of values and this Europe of citizens we need – and that is the last element – we need a more efficient, a more transparent and a more democratic Europe. And this is also in the Constitutional Treaty. Because if with the fifteen member states - and we were twelve, when we were joining twenty years ago, fifteen just two and a half years ago, and are twenty seven today - if with fifteen states it was very difficult to reach unanimity, imagine with twenty seven. Unanimity means paralysis. Because there is always one who says: sorry, I have a problem. Poland for example with Russia, Cyprus on issue of Turkey. We need, of course, to take into account all the legitimate interests and concerns of all member states, but we need a more efficient Europe. So we need more qualified

majority voting. The Constitutional Treaty more than doubled the legal basis, moved to sixty three legal bases for qualified majority voting. We need stronger institutions. The Commission is weaker and weaker, the Council is weaker and weaker, the only institution that is gaining power in the last years is the European Parliament. We need a more transparent Europe. We need a more democratic Europe, role for national parliaments as foreseen in the Constitutional Treaty. So, this is the vision coming from Spain: political Europe, Europe of values, Europe of citizens, more efficient, more transparent, more democratic Europe. For us this Europe, the model of it, is embodied in the Constitutional Treaty that we have already ratified, as you know, in Spain through referendum. But we also wish to know what is the vision of the others, of those who have not yet ratified the Constitutional Treaty. And when we learn of this, than we go to the change of it. We have called a meeting, a summit, a ministerial conference, next Friday in Madrid. There is an invitation from my Latvian colleague and myself, we have sent letters to all those who have ratified the Constitutional Treaty already, i.e. 18 member states; we'll meet in Madrid next Friday. We are exactly 2/3 of the 27, we account for almost 60% of the European population, more than 270 million people. We want to send from Madrid a strong message of the Europe we want. We don't want to focus our debate on the Constitutional Treaty, we want to say the main question we Europeans have to answer and this is the most important question we may have to answer: what Europe we want for this 21st century? What Europe do you want for your children? You have received a certain Europe where you are now living. What Europe do you want to leave to your children and to the children of your children, in this globalised and complicated century we are living. The answer, I hope, that will come from Madrid will be along the lines that I'm telling you: a political Europe, Europe of values, Europe of citizens. A more efficient, more transparent, more democratic Europe. Because we strongly believe Europe is the best answer to globalisation. Through Europe, we are stronger, we are better prepared to protect our values, to protect our people, to protect our interests. And we need to know, what Europe does Poland want, what Europe does France

want, what Europe does the Netherlands want, because you know that the Dutch and French said "no" to the Constitutional Treaty. But they have not presented any alternative so far. And I think we have the legitimate right, also the countries who have ratified - who are 2/3 by the way, and 2/3 is not irrelevant - we need to know what the others want, what Europe they want. And I think through this debate we could help the German Presidency to have a success in June, which is crucial and fundamental. So the main goal of the Madrid meeting is to help the German Presidency in a very difficult task and we will send a message that we are ready to constructively work with the other member states on improving the Treaty. We know that the Constitutional Treaty has to be amended and changed. Everything can be improved. So we are ready to improve the Treaty but on the basis of this Treaty, and always keeping the substance and the balances that are there because we have already ratified the Treaty. But we need to know what the others present to us as an alternative.

So that is, in a nutshell, the idea I wanted to convey to you. And thanks a lot for this very kind invitation. Here you have a few ideas about these 20 years of Spain in Europe, the success story, the present situation, which is rather complicated and the vision, the ideas coming from Spain on the future of Europe. Thank you very much.