2016 EPIIC Spain Delegation Briefing Paper

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**A: Intro**

As one of the most culturally and socially diverse nations of Europe, we are not only familiar with the challenges derived from the governance of many peoples, but also fully committed to solving the challenges which confront the Europe and ensuring the economic, political, and social integrity of ourselves and our global neighbors. This conference extends a forum and platform on which the global community can come together to answer the complex domestic, cross-border, economic, and political questions which confront Europe in the modern day. Moving into this conference, we underscore our growing position as a country of immigrants, and emphasize that the current migrant crisis can’t be solved by blocking the path to assistance for those who need it most. We are personally familiar with the implications of rule by the far right, and caution against growing prevalence of anti-immigrant conservative nationalist parties.

We accentuate our commitment to a strong collective European economy. In the wake of the debt crisis, all European nations must focus on partnership and economic cooperation in order to foster prosperity and guarantee a better future. This partnership may take many forms, and we bring flexibility in regard to economic reform, provided that this reform builds specific structures and regulations into the current nebulous economic state of the Eurozone.

Spain enters the conference with an eager hand and open mind. We realize that if the Union, and Europe as a whole, can realize its issues, then they can be resolved. Identifying, addressing, and resolving these issues are of the utmost importance to Spain, and we hope that our fellow European nations will avoid the obstruction and relegation which too often plagues international conferences.

**B: Key Points:**

Since our transition from a fascist nation to a democratic state, we have been highly supportive of the spread of democracy throughout the world. After having lived under tyranny for so long, we are prepared to protect not only our freedom and sovereignty, but the freedom and sovereignty of all our fellow members of the European Union. Therefore we are extremely against the Russian occupation of Ukraine, as we see it as an infringement on the sovereignty of a fellow democratic state.

As supporters of democracy and sovereignty, we are willing to do what we can afford to preserve Ukrainian jurisdiction over their own territory. Having been dealing with occupation problems of our own, we sympathize with the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian government and find the move by Russia appalling. The European Union’s dependency on a non-member state such as Russia needs to stop. Russian oil can no longer be the driving force in dealings with the nation. First of all, this strengthens Russia’s movements on foreign territory, which as has been discussed, is a violation of our (and those of the European Union’s) beliefs. Second, this is against international law set by the United Nations. We cannot encourage this kind of behavior from a global superpower. Third of all, the dependence on Russian oil can easily be replaced by the renewable energy markets of ourselves, France, Germany, and many others throughout the EU and the world. Military action should be the very last step taken in negotiations with Russia. We are willing to do whatever is necessary to prevent Russia from stretching the laws for their own benefit, but we will not engage in any premature violence which we deem unneccessary. Before combatting any foreign nations, we must be properly equipped to deal with any internal conflicts which we face. For this, we support military intervention by the European Union, as we believe we all can become stronger if we work together.

Our country face two major issues surrounding terrorism. The constant threat we face from ISIS militants is proving to be extremely challenging to deal with, as the organization has been able to set up terrorist cells within our territory. Groups such as Abu Nayaf al-Afghani, Mamoun Darkazanli, Nadim al Magrebi , and Salafia Jihadia have been operating within our borders since 2004. These groups have only become stronger since their backing by the “Islamic State”. Beyond simply the safety of our citizens, we fear the problems this “Islamic” terrorism is causing for our Muslims, as they feel they are being persecuted out of fear as well. These terrorist groups have been trying to stop our involvement with the War on Terror for many years now, but we have been able to hold them back. However, they are getting stronger, and with our military being spread thin due to threats from Morocco to our South, we are calling for any and all help from our allies in ridding our nation of these issues so that we may be more productive globally. As mentioned, the North-African state of Morocco has begun occupying various islands and coasts within our territory, justifying their actions by calling it “revenge” for the destruction of the Moors almost a thousand years ago. We deeply regret this part of our history, but with a nation such as the Ukraine also being invaded by another power, we must call the attention of the European Union back unto ourselves as well. All efforts to isolate ISIS cells and eliminate the threat of the “Islamic” State will be supported to the best of our ability, provided we are aided in our efforts as well.

As an original supporter of the Schengen Agreement, Spain remains in support of the deal. Creating a borderless Europe has helped to reduce tensions between the nations of Europe, and foster the creation of culturally diverse and aware populations. The Schengen Agreement has also allowed the economic relations of all participating states to improve greatly, and its strength we hope will be inspirational to future agreements. With the rise of global terrorism and the refugee crisis, we do understand that more caution must be taken before allowing anyone to cross any border. We believe that the Schengen Agreement can stand pat, but there should be more security present at borders in order to ensure the safety of the people of all participating countries.

The Syrian refugee crisis has greatly impacted the European Union, and we are inspired by the graciousness of countries such as Germany in taking in the refugees. Although we do understand that these are people who have been chased away from their homes by death, destruction, and tyranny, our nation in its current state cannot afford the annexation of many more refugees. Already we have taken in over 1,000 refugees, and although nations such as Germany have accommodated over 20,000, we simply cannot afford to do so. We need to secure our own stability before we can possibly accept (and properly accommodate) more peoples into our nation. With terrorism on the rise, the safety of our own people also comes to mind. Again it is understood that these refugees are not the enemy, but as it is our duty to protect our people, we must ask for a stronger screening process as well. We will try to offer asylum to those deemed safe, but we must be able to push out the terrorist cells which threaten our people before we can accept any more refugees from the war-torn nations of the Middle East.

As for the state of the Euro, we are prepared to do anything to preserve its strength. We have been using the Euro for a very long time now, and we believe that the downfall of the Euro may lead to the downfall of Spain. As member states of the Eurozone, we understand the economic impact of the Euro both locally and globally. The effects of losing the Euro would be catastrophic. In order to bring not only our country, but many other members of the European Union, to a stability so that we all may properly participate in events such as the War on Terror, we will actively fight to protect the Euro.

**C: Background**

From the very beginnings of our country as the Roman province *Hispania*, our identity has been forged by the combination of a vast amalgam of nationalities, peoples, races, and cultures. This is perhaps best manifested in the fortifications at Alhambra, the history of which can be applied to our country as a whole. Beginning as Roman fortifications, Alhambra was converted by [Mohammed ben Al-Ahmar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammed_I_ibn_Nasr) of the Emirate of Granada into a Moorish fortification, before eventually passing back into christian hands and becoming the royal court of Ferdinand and Isabella. The transition between Roman, Moorish, Christian, Fascist, and eventually secular democratic rule has lended us a unique perspective. However, this perspective is not without flaws. Scars on the collective Spanish moral conscious include our transgressions during the Inquisition, Crusades, and Fascist rule of the twentieth century. But realizing our own past faults is Spain’s first step to international leadership and the promotion of peace.

Spanish modern history largely began with the completion of the *Reconquista*, after which all Moorish rulers were expelled from Spain and the kingdoms of Castille and Leon were united under Ferdinand and Isabella. In the same year, 1492, Spain send Christopher Columbus west to find a sea route to Asia. Although Columbus was unable to complete his original goal, his discovery of the new world began a Spanish colonial presence in the America’s extending over four hundred years. In the age of colonialism, we were a major world power, with one of the largest navies in the world and a firm grip on the first truly global cycle of commerce in specie and bullion. Although the age of colonialism has passed, we continue to see our global past in the diversity of Spanish speaking peoples worldwide, and the wide imprint of Spanish culture from the East Asian Philippines to the American Southwest.

The recent history of our great nation has been marred by the events of our past. In 1936, our nation plunged into a massive Civil War which essentially demolished the great naval empire which we had been building since the 16th century. Our civil war, during which Leftist Loyalists funded by the fledgling Soviet Union fought against the Nazi backed rebels, bled our country for the world to watch. In total, this civil war spanned three years, and in 1939, when the war came to an end, the powerful Fascist dictator Francisco Franco emerged as the ruler of Spain.

During World War Two, Spain was officially a non-belligerent, but nonetheless lent support to Nazi Germany, as reparation for military support during the Civil War. We deeply regret the failures of our country to confront the spread of fascism and hate, and realize the damage which could have been prevented had we joined the Allies in fighting against the Axis.

Until the 1950s, we lived under the rule of a fascist leader who enslaved our own people, and prevented our nation from growing, simply due to a fear of losing the monarchy. It was only in the second half of Franco’s regime where our country finally saw some economic development, and true recovery from the war which so scarred us. Before his death in 1975, Franco restored the monarchy and named Juan Carlos I as his successor. We feared the rise of a new dictator, but instead, King Juan Carlos I went against the wishes of the man who appointed him, and brought democracy to Spain. He would remain King and advise an elected Prime Minister, who would run the government itself would run the government itself. Under this new democracy, we have been able to recover from the Civil War and fascist government which followed, but still find ourselves in a position of instability. When we created our constitution in 1978, we wanted to ensure the linguistic and cultural diversity of each of our states. However as of late, the regions of Catalan, Basque Country, and Galicia have been taking more and more rights for themselves, and we fear insurrection from the regions. We are fairly new to democracy, but we believe that we must do what has to be done to protect this democracy. Never again must we allow another Civil War such as what broke out in 1936 to occur again. Besides these internal conflicts which we face, the economic crisis of 2008/9 hit us very hard. In 2013, when our housing bubble burst, our country was forced into a recession. Unemployment rose all the way up to 27.2%. We have been making many strides to recover, but we will need stability within our nation in order to ensure our future success. Military threats and movements from Morocco to our south are also straining our reconstruction. However we have seen major success in our development of renewable energy. We house one of the largest markets in the world, and we believe that it could be our gateway to success. The protection and further development of renewable energy will not only be good for ourselves, but it will be beneficial for the planet as a whole.

D: Commitee Points

**Cross-Border:**

In the light of the migrant crisis and recent Paris attacks, we are concerned about the possibility of criminals and illegal migrants taking advantage of passport-free travel zones. A new ‘mini-Schengen’ has been proposed, excluding Spain, which we strongly oppose, as it would limit the rights and liberties of both Spaniards and Europeans greatly. Many migrants from impoverished African nations such as Mali and Cameroon are taking advantage of the shared border between Morocco and the Spanish enclaves of Melilla and Ceuta to escape into Europe. This issue also applies to Islamist terrorists looking for access to mainland Europe. We have also been in disputes with the British territory of Gibraltar concerning their borders and status as a former Spanish colony.

We were one of the initial signees of the first, 1995, Schengen agreement. We are also one of the signees of the Prüm Treaty in 2005 for the exchange of data on fingerprints and genetic info to combat terrorism, cross border crime, and illegal migration. Though in light of the recent terrorist attacks, Spanish officials have proposed modifications to the Schengen treaty and are backing border controls.

We believe securitization of our borders is essential for the protection of Spanish citizens. As Europe struggles to contain the increasing refugees fleeing from the war-torn Middle East, there have been concerns that radical jihadists may take advantage of the Schengen agreement to easily gain access to Europe. The recent Paris attacks and the possibility that the attackers may have entered as refugees has been especially concerning to us. We absolutely will not tolerate such an attack on our sovereign state and citizens.

Corruption is present in all countries, and it is certainly an issue we have addressed. There are concerns about the corrupt practices of individuals in Spanish politics. Bribery and corrupt practices are unfortunately also a common practice in businesses. Top officials have been found to be guilty of corrupt practices, including Princess Cristina, who is currently on trial for tax fraud.

The honest government policy has been in place in order to protect the country from any corruption prevalent in the government, or an abuse in power by higher ranked political figures. Political figures are elected democratically because they have made promises to the citizens about making their community, or daily life better,or improving the economic stability of their country. And, if they do end up attempting to use their power, political parties shall reveal that political figure’s intention according to the policy. However, we can improve in many areas, and will focus on rooting out bribery as a means to gain political or economic status in Spanish society.

We are in a vulnerable geographic position in regard to cross-border issues because of the effects of global man-made climate change taking place in our country. In the past, there have been cold-waves, although these are expected to decrease in frequency in the future. Extreme heating events, however, are expected to increase in frequency.

Recently, illegal migrations have taken place, and those have risen up by seventy percent between 2013 and 2014. We are vulnerable to migrants that are coming from Northern Africa, who often arrive in makeshift boats.

In terms of energy, we have found a primary use of windpower in our people’s daily life , and wind power is now our leading source of electricity Wind power however, is difficult for financing and hard to invest in, so many companies that support wind power fail. Our government is targeting renewables for our energy, and we have instituted tariffs on renewable energy to ensure Spanish competitiveness in relation to cheap fossil fuel derived electricity. We are not in a strategic position for oil because we lack suitable reserves, and almost all of our oil is imported.

We find that people who make their home in Europe should be able to travel around freely, without passports, and without having the constant concernment of one’s car being searched, or the frequent and long periods of time immigrants have to wait in order to make it across the border. This is for the conviniency of the people. Although we see this as a future, we cannot have this as of right now because we would not like to trouble our citizens with the anxiety of an act of terrorism being committed due to recent events. We are also not completely economically sound to be able to accept new immigrants and support them at the time however, this is still in our great interest to do so. We are holding deficit, and it may be difficult for us to be able to provide jobs for our own citizens.

We a member of the European Union, and it has been since 1 January, 1986, however we have been a member of the Eurozone since 1 January 1999.

**Identity and Integration:**

We were officially non-belligerent in World War Two. However, one division of Spanish volunteers, the Blue Division, fought on the Eastern Front with Nazi Germany against Russia from 1941 to 1943. Thousands of Spanish volunteer also fought with the Allies, namely as part of the Free French Forces. Unlike many of our fellow European Union states, Spain was not completely destabilized by the Second World War, and did not experience a shift in political power after the end of the war.

Historical memory has always influenced our political discourse. In World War Two, our support of Nazi Germany on the Eastern Front was prompted by a desire to stop the advance of Communism, a system fresh in our country’s collective mind from the Spanish Civil War. More recently, we have chosen to look forward—beyond the memory of Franconian Dictatorship—and focus on the future. This comes in the form of our *Pacto del Olvido (*Pact of Forgetting), an unofficial policy which allows us to move beyond Franco’s dictatorship. In turn, present events have influenced our political discourse and prompted the passage of Historical Memory Law in 2007, which has prompted a more deep self reflection.

The Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939 prompted a widespread dislike of Communism which coincided with the rise of Franco’s dictatorship. Consequently, the death of Francisco Franco in 1975 prompted a quiet democratic revolution in the kingdom, from which our current system of government traces its roots. In the present, the memory of Franconian dictatorship emphasizes the importance of democratic principles. Also of note is the resurgence of leftist politics —the Spanish Socialist Workers Party and recently founded socialist Podemos Party are two of our largest political parties.

14% of the total population are immigrants while the rest are Spanish natives. Among the immigrants, 57% are Latin Americans. Even among the Spanish natives, there is a minority population in Catalonia with their own unique identity and language, which makes them the most independence minded. Their main language is similar to regional languages in southern France, like Castilian Spanish. Even so, there is a variety of other languages in other regions like Valencia region and Balearic islands, that make up the “Catalan countries”.

Before the war, Catalonia had a population of 2.9 million. Many Jewish refugees who fled to our nation for protection and escape became a minority group in our country. We allowed 25,000 Jews to cross our lands to escape Europe. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee operated openly in Barcelona, a part of the Catalonia region. Ever since the late 1990s, waves of immigrants came in for overseas work in the construction led boom as well.

Catalonia is an industrial region, known for manufacturing traditional textiles. Because of this, Catalonia is an economic powerhouse. Not only are they well off on their own, they are also very independent-minded with their own language and identity. In the 19th century, Catalonia ushered for a renewed sense of Catalan identity, creating campaigns for political autonomy and separatism. When Spain became a republic in 1931, Catalonia was given autonomy, however during Franco’s conservative rule, autonomy was revoked. Catalan nationalism was repressed and their language was restricted. After the death of Franco, the democratic constitution was adopted, and Catalonia recovered their rights to self-govern its people and reconstituted their parliament and executive, also known as Generalitat. Under the 1981 Statute of Autonomy, we recognize and guarantee the right of autonomy for regions of historical identity. In 2006, we adopted the Statute of Autonomy unanimously into our constitution, thus allowing these minority regions to rule separately but yet still be part of the state.

Those living in Spain for 5 years, but not a citizen, can apply for permanent residence. But they will have to wait another 5 years to apply for Spanish nationality and citizenship. Non-citizens who hold a permanent residency permit can enjoy most of the same benefits of Spanish citizens, as long as they are financially stable. They can move around EU but for limited periods of up to 3 months. Although their rights almost match the rights of a Spanish citizen, one thing that sets them apart is that non-citizens cannot vote.

We have always supported and encouraged multiculturalism within our borders, as shown by the mixture of Muslim and Christian traditions into a culture of acceptance and diversity, while remaining very distinct and unique from others in our nation. The goal of Spanish policy is to maintain an egalitarianism which has fueled our cultural and economic growth.

From 1991 to 2014, our population of foreign-born residents increased from less than one percent to over ten percent. However, this distinct increase has not been met with a rise of xenophobic right-wing movements as seen in fellow EU member states. For example, the 2004 Madrid bombings—carried out by Moroccan terrorists—did not result in a public outcry for a tightening of immigration policy. The adjective “irregular” is preferred to “illegal” when describing immigrants. Widespread acceptance of immigrants reflects the success of our policies.

Our country is home to a diverse group of ethnicities, the largest three of which are the Andalusian, Catalan, Basque, and Galician peoples. In general, Spanish ethnic divisions are not contentious in a physical sense. However, there are active independence movements in all aforementioned regions. Generally, these movements are peaceful and seek a diplomatic dialogue through proper channels. Some conflicts, such as the 1959-2011 Basque Conflict, have resulted in violence. Overwhelmingly, independence initiatives such as the Catalan Independence Movement are marked by peaceful conversation.

Our country does emphasize these rights shown in the fair policies we give to citizens and to Catalonia. We emphasize and respect democratic values and granting these political, individual, social, cultural rights to our people proves so.

In our country, we face secession with 17 different regions that we grant autonomy to. Recently, Catalan wanted full independence especially because of the economic crisis we, as a whole, are in. They claimed that they give more to Madrid than they get back. They also blamed our central government for the debt crisis. On November 2012, Catalonia government developed two main separatist parties, where 80% voted ‘yes” to secession during an informal, non-binding vote in 2014. Similarly, there are many other regions within our borders which face secessionist movements, such as Andalusian, Galician, and the Basque. Andalusia is a southern region of Spain officially registered as the most populated autonomous community. It was traditionally an agricultural region, with a strong cultural identity influenced by the Moors and Muslims. The Galicians gained their autonomy in a similar process, which is through the 1981 Statute of Autonomy. The Basques gained the status of a nationality within Spain through our constitution drafted in 1978.

Spanish policy is still marked by acceptance and integration of immigrants, but the immigrant crisis has prompted a revision of certain laws to account for contingencies not previously encountered. For example, the Law on Public Security has been amended and now allows for rejection of unauthorized immigrants at the ports of Ceuta and Melilla in order to prevent illegal immigration.

**Migration:**

Spain is dedicated to providing for its citizens, and citizen security (employment, financial, food safety) is our priority. Therefore, with regard to any migrants, we are committed to providing strict and effective security checks for all incoming people, especially refugees or people seeking asylum. Jobs for migrants are also an issue, because the increasing amount of migrants fueled by the crises occurring elsewhere in Europe causes many of our existing citizens to be jobless. We, as the central Spanish government, are very concerned about these two issues, although individual cities, such as Valencia, have had demonstrations welcoming such refugees. However, we continue to struggle with documenting immigrants. Many Africans (and Syrian refugees who end up in North Africa) travel by boat across the Strait of Gibraltar and enter our country illegally. Therefore, it is impossible to outline the exact number of migrants, which is a threat to our safety because we cannot successfully run security checks on people entering and exiting our country illegally.

Traditionally, Spain has seen higher numbers of emigrants than immigrants. We have traditionally welcomed immigrants, particularly ones originating from North Africa as well as Latin America. Essentially, we provide a middle passage for immigrants seeking to go to Central/South America and/or the Caribbean Islands, and many people live in our country for a few years before leaving for those places. However, the amount of immigrants who are coming into our country and staying long-term significantly weigh down the economy over time. Many of these migrants are illiterate or have no experience with Spanish society, and therefore are forced to compete with the more unfortunate Spanish citizens for low-paying jobs. This is a negative impact on our citizens, and although some migrants do find jobs, many remain unemployed and are burdens on our society. Due to the high unemployment rate caused by what we believe is excessive integration of both legal and illegal migrants, Spain is severely impacted. This unemployment rate is one of the foremost and most critical issues that our society is facing.

Primarily, integrating migrants into our European society involves ensuring that they have jobs which will provide them adequate shelter and food, as well as ensuring that they receive support and other social services available to the general public. However, Spain’s unemployment rate is at 22.7% this year, which is over double of that of neighboring countries, such as France or Italy. This shows that even our own citizens and legal, permanent residents have difficulty locating jobs, demonstrating that it will be even harder for immigrants to create jobs. Therefore, without locating a suitable job, immigrants cannot provide for themselves. This is the primary and most important and critical implication of integrating immigrants into our society.

Spain believes that asylum seekers should be subject to reformed policies which ensure that member states share the burden of integrating migrants. In Spain, unemployment for new legal and illegal immigrants stands as a very difficult obstacle in their integration into our society. Therefore, other EU members (with lower unemployment rates)should be responsible for allowing these migrants into their countries to seek employment, whereas our country, which already has a high unemployment rate (22%+), can not successfully integrate more due to obvious restrictions.

In the current circumstances, we are accepting legal immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers into our country, and throughout the past years the numbers are rising However, these immigrations are decreasing in rate as we now have some minor economic/financial complications. Many of these immigrants originate from Eastern Europe, Africa, and Latin America. However, it is also worth noting that many illegal sub-saharan refugees are entering our mainland via certain parts of northern Africa, including our territory Morocco, by first establishing temporary holding at those places. In even more recent cases, Syrian refugees have utilized our African colonies through fake passports as a platform for fleeing into Spain, UK, and other EU countries, despite the dangers of such attempts.

In the last twenty or so years, we have experienced a dramatic change from initially a country of emigrants to now being a nation of immigrants. We do typically accept immigrant populations into our country given that they show some forms of commitment and integration into our country. Traditionally, the general public also express very little to of anti-immigrants as we do believe that they can better our economy and exhibit our country’s democratic aspect. However, this sort of feeling may change in the near future as the unemployment rate increase and we are more focused on the safety of our nation other than accepting all legal immigrants. In our country, to achieve official citizenship, immigrants are required to have resided in Spain for a certain number of years, have knowledge of the Spanish language, and have fused into the society.

Per our priorities and dedications to our nation’s security and safety, we do uphold a strong standard in committing to our policies. As we have mentioned previously, we do allow refugees and immigrants to enter our country and become a permanent resident after a certain number of years, but only through the means of legal process and acceptance. For example, legally entering our country means, entry in an official port stated by government and ability to prove one’s identity. In the past years, we have adopted the Strategic Plan of Citizenship and Integration or SPCI which is a set of policies aimed at outlining criterias and a fair process to gain citizenship immigrants. On the other hand in our commitment and effort to protect our soil against illegal refugees, namely from Africa, we have strengthened our borders in Melilla and Ceuta from wall jumpers, by employing Guardia Civil.

**Security:**

Our country has been targeted by ISIS and many of their North African affiliates. We believe their motives are both social and economic. Socially, they wish to take revenge on the Spanish people for our efforts hundreds of years ago to eradicate Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula. In the name of our ancestors, we apologize for the damage caused by the Muslim community, and hope that we can come to agreements ensuring the safety of modern day Spanish Muslims. Economically, we believe that ISIS wishes to take out our renewable energy funds in order to create more demand for their oil reserves and potentially control Europe’s energy market. In addition to terrorist cells attacking from both the outside and inside, the Moroccan government has been making moves on our southern territory, threatening our sovereignty by occupying southern islands. Understandably this is a major concern not only for ourselves, but for our allies as well. Any further attacks could hurt our energy market, which not only are we dependant on, but many others rely on in order to advance their sustainable energy market and reduce carbon emissions as per the agreement made during 2015’s COP21 United Nations Climate change talks. With Morocco continuing to attempt to advance up our coast, any assistance, military or diplomatic, would be greatly beneficial.

After the attacks on Paris, many people would argue that either Iraq or Syria is the most threatening to us, because of the risk of terrorists returning and launching similar attacks. Others would argue, our deteriorating relationship with Russia is the most dangerous security challenge since the Cold War. However, we believe that Russia has a common desire to root out the terrorist cells within each of our nations and simultaneously and systematically target each group that has a vested interest in our destruction. In order to achieve our goal of uprooting terror within our own nation, we have increased the terror awareness in Spain from three to four (out a total of five), signifying a "high risk" of a terror attack. We are currently debating the pros and cons of allowing Catalonia, a region within our nation, to secede. This may prove to cause some difficulty in our ability to assist nations in combating terror, but we are confident that our former country men and women would assist us in this righteous global effort. Nonetheless, support from the outside will be highly appreciated, and possible rewards may be deals regarding renewable energy supply, which could save foreign markets millions of dollars long term.

We currently serve in these alliances: NATO, CISOR , OSCE, and Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (the US-led coalition). We are a large military contributor to these alliances as well. Although we don’t have much military capability compared to other countries in NATO, we still believe in promoting peace through giving supplies to our allies, and therefore donate sizeable quantities of troops to the peace-keeping efforts. We understand the terrorist threats which lurk around our endangered continent and nation, and are more than willing to do what it takes to eradicate this threat. We have mainly been an auxiliary force in the overall war against terror but we are willing to give as much help possible in order to end the global threat that terrorist groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda present to our world. With threats to deal with not only from terrorist groups, but from Morocco on our southern border, we will do whatever we can to ensure the safety of our allies as well.

We are members of NATO and the OSCE so we support their collective actions. We are especially supportive of missions made to combat terrorist influence and power in the Middle East. The heinous and diabolical reign of these extremist has ended thousands of lives within the course of only a few decades. The ties between our nation and the United States of America are close. We consider the United States to be a close ally because of their involvement in the United Nations and other collaborative groups with the goal of achieving peace. The global peace that many of our nations have achieved since the cold war is in a fragile state. Terrorism presents one of the largest threats to global security since the Cold War. With terrorists getting more and more confident in their military capability, nations must work together to stop their attempts to destroy, decimate, devastate, and deconstruct our great nations. Another large concern for our nation is the security of our energy and supply. As a nation dependant on the sustainability of our energy market, we simply cannot allow our supply to be damaged. Considering that we also provide a large number of countries with energy, it would be recommended that others take concern in the protection of energy trade as well.

As Europe's largest producer of renewable energy, we are very proud of our dependency on renewable energy and resources, and in our ability to produce these resources not only for ourselves, but for the rest of Europe and on the world market as well. 47% of our energy comes from renewable sources, with 20.9% of that energy coming from our own wind energy farms. We distribute wind and solar energy globally and have great interest in protecting these products. With threats coming not only from terrorist cells but also aggressive nations from the south, we are very interested in any deals or agreements that will combat ISIS and terrorism worldwide. Our selling of resources will only continue if our sovereignty is respected and maintained. We will be very gracious towards any and all energy deals which meet our needs of protection from outside threats and possibly even for support against internal insurrection. Part of our nation, the region of Catalonia, has attempted to split into their own nation, greatly stressing our efforts to contain the terrorist threat and bring our renewable energy based economy back into stability. Any agreements which could bring us back to proper stability will be very much appreciated.

As one of Europe’s largest energy providers, Spain sells energy to a majority of Europe. Our renewable energy industry leads the world, and has been a source of cooperation between ourselves and many countries worldwide. We have been one of the largest players in the research, development, and production of renewable energy, and as a result of this, we helped to pioneer the founding of an International Energy Agency. This organization, founded in 1973 after the Oil Crisis decimated the world economy, consists of 30 member states. Each state is a large power, and the organization has a very diverse population, with member states ranging from Europe all the way to Turkey, and even to New Zealand. Our involvement with the International Energy Agency has been extremely satisfactory to both our own nation and also the other member states. We have been able to cooperate with dozens of other nations, member and nonmember, in order to create deals regarding our energy supply, energy security, and power generation fleet, and the needs of our fellow states. Cross-border connections have been pioneered, and soon we hope to advance the trust between the EU’s internal market as well. However all of this would require reform against the threat of terrorism worldwide.

**Eurozone:**

We are in tough spot economically, due to high unemployment rates, the housing bubble, and an emerging black market. Currently, we are making our way out of a recession, and although the process is slow, we believe that we can still bring back Spain to economic prosperity. Last year, we had economic growth of 3.1%, which is remarkable considering that we are coming out of the longest period of recession we have ever faced. In fact, 3.1% is actually one of the highest rates of growth in Europe, however, with unemployment rates still at 22.7%, we know that there is still a large amount of work to be done to fix our situation.

Greece’s economic crisis has weakened unity within the European Union, which in turn has lowered confidence in European lenders. Countries such as Germany, who were once willing to assist other countries economically, are now hesitant to lend money to countries in need because they do not trust how responsibly their money will be handled and if they will be repaid. Without help from other countries in the European Union our economy will be slow to recover. Also, in order to solve our banking crisis, we will need to inject our banks with capital. However, the amount that it would take us to fix the banking problems, estimated at 10% of our GDP, will put us into too much debt to recover from. Therefore, we will need investment and loans from strong nations in the Eurozone, but this seems like an increasingly hard task as the crisis in Greece unfolds. So the current the reluctance to lend in the more powerful European nations, which was caused by the Greek economic crisis, definitely impacts us negatively, and could prolong our economic problems.

When the European Union decided to unite under the same currency, it became very cheap to borrow money as interest rates were lowered. Lowered interest rates were put in place to facilitate economic growth, however, no regulations were issued to ensure that the debtors could pay back the loans. As more people were not able to pay back the money they loaned from banks, problems such as the housing bubble occurred. Banks who foreclosed on homes now ended up with no money and cheap homes worth less money than what they initially lent out. Banks collapsed because they had no more money, and unemployment rates soared, inflation boomed, which has ended up in a complete economic crisis in the Eurozone.

The EU is based on political policy. It is a political union composed of 28 member states located in Europe. The Eurozone is a union within the EU based on a monetary policy. It is composed of 19 of the 28 EU member states that have adopted the euro as their common currency. The euro is a great example of monetary policy, in which each country that joins the euro agrees on similar economic aspects of their political relationship.

European unity will be challenged as countries in the European Union are responsible with having to pay for the faults of less responsible countries. The crisis is a challenge to the future of the euro and maybe even to European unity. It reveals many of the problems with the European Union. However, this allows for an increased integration within the EU. If the union can realize its issues, then they can be resolved. We are only as strong as our weakest links and those links can only be revealed by the problems they cause.

The euro crisis is a byproduct of Europe’s cohesion issues, what some call a “half-built house”. Europe adopted the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in the 1990s and while it was held together by the euro it included very little of an economic union. It included no fiscal union, no banking union, and no coordination of structural economic policies.

In order to fix our economy, the European Central Bank has to allow for more inflation. Inflation would allow for countries like us, that are currently uncompetitive, to bring down our costs, which will spur spending and growth, thus cutting down on our debt. On top of that, countries in economic trouble like us have to be given more stimulus from euro zone countries that are in a strong economic position such as Germany. It is impossible for us and Greece to provide our own stimuli without having to cut spending later on when the economy has improved.

While the exit of the euro should be approached with the utmost caution, it is not necessarily a bad thing, and in certain cases it should be allowed and perhaps encouraged. For Greece, for example, we believe that the exit of the Euro would in the long run actually benefit Greece whereas keeping the Euro could perpetuate its high unemployment. With the introduction of the Drachma, Greece could jumpstart their economy with inflation that would cause cheaper exports and therefore more exporting. This is actually an option for the benefit of our people which we are considering.

In August 2015, we posted what had been the strongest quarterly growth in the last 8 years. In order to do this, we increased austerity measures by cutting public-sector wages among other strategies. More importantly however, we have lowered the corporate tax rate to 25 percent from 30 percent and the top marginal rate on personal income to 45 percent from 52 percent, as well as give the corporations more flexibility to set wages and working conditions. These economic policies led us to a strong quarter, and in 2015 we predicted 3.3% growth for the year, however, we are still worried about economic policy for the future. Much of the growth from this year was from measures that were somewhat out of our hands, such as low inflation, a cheap euro, a fall in energy prices, and increased tourism in the past season, which is why we are still worried about our future economic policies. Our plan at the moment is to continue with the policies we enacted in 2015, as we have seen results with it in the past.

However, aside from austerity measures and lowering taxes, we actually have a more important issue to direct our policy at. The property bubble was caused by numerous Spanish firms taking out foreign debt at once, which gave us a temporary boost due to the added capital in our country. However, this was only temporary, and proved to hurt us greatly as the property bubble popped. Furthermore, the debt taken out made us extremely dependent on foreign lenders. So our future policy has to be aimed at cleaning up Spanish banks by removing bad assets, and then proceed in shutting down or recapitalizing the remaining banks. However, this cleanup will cost a large sum of money. We estimate it to take about 100 billion euro, 10% of our GDP. Our debt would still be kept under 100% of our GDP, but there would be an enormous strain on our finances. It is for this reason that we need to negotiate for other European nations to inject capital into our banks, which would save our finances, break the tie between our weakening banks and our increasing debt, and more importantly, strengthen the Eurozone as a whole.

We have to have austerity measures to a certain extent, and actually last year introduced an austerity plan of 65 billion euro, in order to reduce our trillion-euro debt, however, it slows economic growth and often deepens the recession. The problem is that it seems like no matter how much we try to cut, we are just too far in the hole to come back. Austerity measures such as budget cuts have affected education, public health, and social benefits. Even after lowering our spending from 162 billion to 150 billion between 2012 and 2014, our unemployment rate still remained very high at 23.7% and economic growth only grew 1.4%. This leads us closer and closer to defaulting on our debts and having to leave the euro all together. Plus, our public debt is not the biggest fiscal issue that we are facing at the moment, which is why we should not be entirely focused on austerity measures. Our debt, which is about 70% of our GDP, is lower than Germany, an economic powerhouse. The problem is actually private debt. Many Spanish firms went on a debt binge at once, giving us a sudden influx of the borrowed money, which caused the property bubble, while making our country extremely dependent on foreign lenders. The debt that private lenders have is almost 1 trillion euro, which is more than 90% of the GDP. So our time may be better spent cleaning up the banks than focusing solely on austerity measures.

**Governance:**

The Kingdom of Spain, despite our regal name, is a constitutional monarchy. We have still kept our long hereditary tradition of having a king or queen but their power is very limited. Our government resembles a modern day democracy with the exception of having a monarch as the head of state. The king or queen does not have an executive role in the government other than appointing important officials and serving as commander and chief of our military. Our current monarch is King Felipe VI who became king on June 19, 2014. The executive branch of their government is run by our Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is in charge of picking the cabinet or the council of ministers. He is nominated by the current monarch and officially confirmed by the Congress of Deputies. The Congress of Deputies along with the senate makes up the legislative branch and the bicameral parliament. Our congress is made up of 350 member which are elected by the proud people of our country, each member serving 4 year terms. The senate is made up of 259 members, 208 of being elected by the popular vote and the remaining being elected by regional legislatures. Our current prime minister is Mariano Rajoy Brey, who was elected on December 21, 2011. The Spanish State is also a country, like Switzerland and Belgium, with autonomous communities. Our country is divided into autonomous communities each having their own elected parliaments, budgets, administrations etc. There are currently 17 autonomous communities and 2 autonomous cities, all integrated by 50 provinces. Our modern government was established under in the Constitution of Spain in 1978. This was a huge transition for our beloved country, turning us into a democratic state. The Constitution of Spain was signed shortly after the death of the spanish dictator Francisco Franco. Franco’s death was the end of a horrible dictatorship and our Constitution has transformed our nation into a strong, developed democratic society.

We, although identified as a kingdom, are multi-political party nation. In our national section of government, we have two main political parties. The People’s Party is a conservative and centre-right wing political organization and the larger of the two main parties within our government. The PP is a neoliberal party that follows neoliberal economic policies, impelling privatization of public sector enterprises and reduction of public expenditures. Party leaders such as our Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, also the President of the People’s Party, are for budget cuts and are strong on private sector jobs. The second major political party is the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE). This party is the left-wing establishment of our nation are advocate fighters for the middle and working class. As the oldest political party in Spanish history,the PSOE have been fighting for social issues since 1879. The PSOE is a pro-europeanism party and centre-left. Spain has an enormous amount of political parties that all contribute to both the state and the autonomous communities. Other groups such as United Left that are extremely left wing and other small parties that only focus on issues in their communities. The political divide between the main parties is split on issues such as, jobs, budgets, and the economy.

Our government has been involved in the European Union since 1986. We currently have 54 members in the European Parliament representing Spain. We also send national ministers to the EU Council in order to coordinate new policies and laws for the EU. Spain’s role is very similar to other European Countries, We represent ourselves and submit ideas to help create a more superior and improved future for Europe. A democratic deficit is defined as when a European Union Institution lacks a democratic style and seem inaccessible to ordinary citizens. In other words, it is when the European Union lacks actual European politics. We do not believe that there is a democratic deficit present in the European Union.

Currently, one major political point of contention in our nation is the lack of available jobs and increasing unemployment rate. Labor reforms are one of our top priorities in order to decrease the growing percentage of unemployed people between ages 16 and 64. Our unemployment rate is one of our largest priorities. We would very much like to find a solution to this at the simulation. Another point of political contention is the lack of continuing government after the last general election (in December 2015) failed to produce a party with a majority. A new government has not been formed yet. Political parties can form coalitions to reach a "majority" that would allow them to govern but there is no agreement among the different parties. A new election may be needed in 2016. The surge of a new, extreme, left-wing party is jeopardizing the political stability even further. Another point of contention is the threat of independence on the part of the Catalonian region. Catalonians seem to be split in half as to whether they would like their region to separate from Spain. Our central government has rejected the proposal in favor of a unified nation.

Our government is a very accepting one. We have a just and accessible government to our citizens, immigrants, citizens of the European Union, and visitors. We are a country that is open to change and people of other countries. All citizens of the European Union who live within our borders are eligible to vote in our elections, giving them an equal voice in our government. Citizens of the European Union can even run for an elected position under certain circumstances. The diversity of our country is one of the things that separates us from less diverse countries. It opens up windows of opportunities to us that in the long run better our country. Socially, our constitution guarantees the basic human rights of the people. Torture and inhumane punishments are prohibited. We believe that all people should receive inalienable rights, and that medically speaking, no one should be denied treatment in an emergency.

Our government is also one that strives to be equal socially. We strong support the rights of homosexuals, women, religion, and other races. In order to ensure that our government is evenly balanced between male and female voices there are a certain number of seats reserved for each gender. Socially, we are pro-choice on abortion, offer universal free health care, universal education, and the right to marry the person you love.

In short, our governance committee is looking to improve our country in areas of unemployment and seek advice on what to do regarding our latest election. Our country is currently very strong in terms of social and political equality for both citizens and noncitizens. It is important to us that every person gets a voice. The Kingdom of Spain is a constitutional monarchy. Although we have a king, he is head of the state in name only. Our current prime minister, Mariano Rajoy, was elected democratically in 2004. He is the current leader of the People’s Party, as such we will be representing the People’s Party at the simulation. Our goal is to help other countries with establishing social and political systems similar to ours giving them a way to become more socially just. Our system benefits us not just in keeping the people happy, but by giving us an additional way of viewing the world.

**Foreign Policy:**

We, Spain, operate within the framework of the European Union (EU) but we do take an individualistic approach when solving external issues. We have cooperated with other European and western countries through the EU and the Partnership Co-operation Agreement as we strive to make multilateral connections involving economic unions and partnerships aiding both countries financially. We pride ourselves in taking legalistic approaches to major external issues, which affect other countries in our region. We have managed vigorous relations with our neighboring countries, France, Andorra and Portugal, by mitigating trade conflicts through the context of the EU. Through the EU we have provided economic support to France. We have promoted the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership between the EU and the United States of America as we view it to be overarchingly beneficial to many nations within the EU. On several occasions we have provided political, economic and military support for EU and French missions, the NATO mission, and the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. As well as this, through bilateral cooperation with France we have taken action against Basque terrorism in our country. We have become a leader regarding solutions to the Libyan crisis by creating a conference in Madrid addressing these issues. We are willing to negotiate the terms of a joint-EU foreign policy involving trade relations, economic standings and finances between other countries. Currently, we have a voice in economic crises and foreign relations with other countries, but we are mainly concerned with countries affiliated with ourselves.We hope to broaden relations with other countries as our goal is to grow in a beneficial way.

We are more than willing to cooperate with the European Union in any way in order to protect the Ukrainian people. The Spanish government is concerned with the rising tensions in Ukraine and the increasing escalation regarding its territorial integrity and unstable circumstance. We recognize the illegality of the annexation of Crimea and its referendum, and this process does not uphold the international law and therefore it is not justified. While the situation remains uncertain in Ukraine, we hope that the violence will be resolved soon. We are willing to cooperate with the European Union on peacemaking policies that can ease the tension between Ukraine and Russia. To do this, we would like the E.U. to incorporate Russia’s interest in the discussion to work together to propose a stable solution regarding the decision on the implementation of Ukraine, annexation of Crimea, and all other conflicts arose from this crisis, while still maintaining economic relations and trade partnerships between the multilateral countries. Regarding to Russia’s sanctions on agricultural and food export on most European countries, we hope that, as the European Union, we can work together with Russia on coming up with a compromise, since the sanctions are benefiting no one, and in fact, it is hurting both sides in terms of economic loss and damage. We support the E.U.’s positions and preserve its unity but also continue to invest in diplomatic engagement with Russia.

We are a country which promotes peace and independence in foreign policy without integrating any use of force, except for extreme necessity of the situation. On February 7th, 2011, massive protests took place in Benghazi, a coastal state in Libya, against its long-time autocratic dictator Muammar Gaddafi, who had vowed to “cleanse Libya house by house.” As a Member State of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, it is our responsibility to protect the sovereignty and human rights of the Libyan people. NATO commits to the peaceful resolution of disputes and if diplomatic efforts failed, it has the right to intervene military operations in affairs response to crisis-management. Therefore, we have approved military intervention in Libya is in favor that the military action in Libya goes in the hands of NATO. In addition, we sent four F-18 fighter planes to aid the NATO operation and enforce the no-fly zone. We are satisfied with the leadership of United Kingdom, France, and the United States in this crisis. It is important to note that the intention of this mission is not to remove Gaddafi from his position but to restore the state of government in Libya.

The European Union should work with the United States of America’s foreign policy issues when the issue is deemed at the utmost urgency and/ or a threat to national security in order that we maintain the peace between nations. We believe that along with the European Union, a stance of neutrality is essential in maintaining a sensible and reasonable balance between the countries to retain the barrier of peace. Many of the United State’s foreign policy issues deal with cyber attacks, inefficient acquiring of money, and drug trafficking, and in these instances we believe the European Union has no merit or license in these foreign policy because they happen on American turf and we trust that the United States has the capability and resources to independently resolve these issues. Conversely, when the United States’s foreign policy issues (such as revival of large scale terrorist groups and infringement of global treaties) affect countries on a expeditious scale, we deem it appropriate to work closely with the U.S. We are acquainted with United States of America in International OHC Partnership Council, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization. The United States provides us no financial aid (development assistance), thus making our relationship strictly economic and military based. We have mutually communicated in the past to form a commerce and bilateral taxation treaty. Economically, several companies from the United States invest in Spanish investments and operations through third world countries. The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Spanish National Institute for Aerospace Technology has provided aid in Madrid Deep Space Communications Complex by cooperating together in space explorations.