

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

1/18

OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM
AND OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE
(CÓRDOBA 8-9 JUNE, 2005)

MINISTER'S SPEECH,

OPENING CEREMONY

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

2/18

MR. PRESIDENT ¹,
MINISTERS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IT IS A PARTICULAR PLEASURE FOR ME TO EXTEND **CORDIAL GREETINGS** TO ALL MINISTERS, DELEGATES, GUESTS AND THOSE ATTENDING THIS CONFERENCE, AND **TO WELCOME YOU TO CÓRDOBA.**

I SHOULD ALSO LIKE TO EXPRESS DUE **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE **MADE IT POSSIBLE** WITH THEIR WORK AND IN THEIR VARIOUS FIELDS SO THAT THE **OFFER I MADE LAST YEAR IN BERLIN MIGHT TAKE FORM IN THIS CONFERENCE** ON ANTISEMITISM AND OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE.

¹ Acting OSCE President, the Slovene Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Rupel)

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

3/18

I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THE **BROAD PRESENCE** IN CÓRDOBA OF **MANY REPRESENTATIVES OF SOCIETY AND OF NUMEROUS NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS** AND OTHER **INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**. WE ALL HAVE A **COMMON OBJECTIVE** IN THE **FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM AND ALL OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION**, WITHOUT EXCEPTIONS. WE MUST COMBINE ALL POSSIBLE EFFORTS. WE ARE ALL NECESSARY. WE HAVE SEEN OVER HISTORY HOW, OFTEN, WHEN THE MAJORITY BOWED ACTIVELY OR PASSIVELY TO BARBARITY AND ATROCITY, ALL THAT WAS NEEDED WAS THE VOICE AND ACTIONS OF A FEW, A MINORITY, TO WAKEN CONSCIENCES AND RESTORE THE DIGNITY AND HUMANITY WE THOUGHT LOST.]

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

4/18

TODAY, THE THREATS TO OUR COEXISTENCE ARE FAR MORE GLOBAL, AND WE NEED ORGANISED COLLABORATION IN CONFRONTING THEM, THE FIGHT AGAINST INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION GOING BEYOND THE OSCE'S BORDERS. IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT THE MESSAGE OF TOLERANCE AND RESPECT WHICH I AM CERTAIN WILL COME FROM THIS CONFERENCE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO EFFORTS FOR A CONSOLIDATION OF WELL-FOUNDED HOPES FOR PEACE WHERE THEY ARE MOST NEEDED. **IF COEXISTENCE WAS POSSIBLE IN THE PAST, AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF CÓRDOBA, WE CANNOT RESIGN OURSELVES** TO THINKING THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TODAY. WE NEED TO BE COURAGEOUS, AND FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THOSE WHO, IN THE SPAIN OF THE THREE CULTURES, WERE ABLE TO RECONCILE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND OFFER AN EXAMPLE OF COEXISTENCE IN DIVERSITY.

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

5/18

A YEAR AGO, THE CITY WHICH WELCOMES US NOW COMMEMORATED THE **800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF MAIMONIDES**, THE JEWISH PHILOSOPHER WHOSE LIFE AND WORK REPRESENT THE PEAK OF CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS COEXISTENCE IN THE SPAIN OF THAT TIME. IN THIS VERY PLACE, IN THE TIMES OF MAIMONIDES, THE **CALL TO PRAYER** SOUNDED FROM THE NEIGHBOURING MOSQUE, IN HARMONY WITH THE **RABBI'S PSALMODY** FROM THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE **PRAYER OF THE PRIEST** FROM THE CHURCH. AT THAT TIME, JEWISH PHILOSOPHERS, LIKE MAIMONIDES HIMSELF, WROTE THEIR TREATISES IN ARABIC, USING BEAUTIFUL HEBREW CHARACTERS. POETS PRAISED BEAUTY IN VERSES WHERE THE CADENCES OF ARABIC, HEBREW AND ROMANCE COULD BE PERCEIVED. MERCHANDISE WAS EXCHANGED IN THE MARKETS OF CÓRDOBA FROM THE MOST REMOTE CORNERS OF THE WORLD. THE CITY'S STREETS, MONUMENTS AND GARDENS, ILLUMINATED AT NIGHT BEFORE

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

6/18

THOSE OF ANY OTHER CITY IN EUROPE WERE, JUSTLY, ORNAMENT OF THE
WORLD.

AND YET THAT EXCEPTIONAL MOMENT CAME TO AN END. AS SO
OFTEN, INTRANSIGENCE AND THE WISH TO ELIMINATE THE OTHER
PREVAILED. IN OUR HISTORY, **LOSS OF THAT SPIRIT OF COEXISTENCE** WAS
A TRAGEDY WHICH CULMINATED WITH THE **EXPULSION OF THE JEWS IN
1492** AND, LATER, OF THE MOORS. IN THAT CRUSADE OF THE MODERN
WORLD, **SPAIN** OPENED OTHER PATHS TO THE WEST, TOWARD AMERICA,
BUT ALSO **LOST AN ESSENTIAL PART OF ITSELF.**

FORTUNATELY, AFTER A LONG AND COMPLEX MARCH, TODAY'S SPAIN
HAS LEARNED FROM THE PAST AND HAS BEEN ABLE TO CONNECT WITH
THE DEEP CURRENT OF TOLERANCE IT SHOULD NEVER HAVE ABANDONED.

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

7/18

AT THE SAME TIME, RECONCILIATION AMONG SPANIARDS HAS BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY **RECOVERY OF HIDDEN OR LOST FACETS OF OUR HISTORY**, AMONG THEM **ONE OF THE MOST BELOVED BEING THE JEWISH DIMENSION.**

SPAIN, SEPHARDI, ARE SYNONYMS. FOLLOWING THE EXPULSION, MANY JEWS REMAINED IN THEIR MOTHERLAND, AT THE PRICE OF CONVERSION. WE OWE TO SOME OF THEM **WORKS WHICH ARE THE PEAK OF OUR CULTURE** IN LITERATURE, MYSTICISM, PHILOSOPHY OR IN LAW. REMEMBER FRAY LUIS DE LEÓN, LUIS VIVES, BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS. MANY OTHERS WENT INTO EXILE AND BECAME PART OF PILGRIM SPAIN, TAKING WITH THEM THE BLOOD OF THEIR SPIRIT – SPANISH JEWRY – THEIR CUSTOMS AND THEIR NOSTALGIA, WHEREVER THEY SETTLED, AND AN INTIMATE PART OF OURSELVES SURVIVED. THE SPAIN WHICH HAD

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

8/18

RECOVERED ITS TOLERANCE RECOGNISED THIS WHEN, IN **1990**, **THE PRINCE OF ASTURIAS PRIZE FOR CONCORD WAS AWARDED TO THE SEPHARDIC COMMUNITIES.**

HOWEVER, OUR VIEW AND OUR ACTION NEEDS TO GO BEYOND THE LINK WHICH, SINCE TIMES PAST, CONNECTS US WITH THE JEWISH WORLD THROUGH SEPHARDI. ACCOUNT MUST ALSO BE TAKEN OF PAINFULLY MORE RECENT EVENTS. AS PART OF THE DIASPORA, THE SEPHARDIS, LIKE THE REST OF THE JEWS, SUFFERED THE INDESCRIBABLE HORROR OF THE **HOLOCAUST**. AS WE ALL KNOW, SHOAH WAS THE CULMINATION OF CENTURIES OF HATRED OF THE JEWS. ANTISEMITISM, EXPRESSED IN MANY WAYS THROUGH HISTORY, FOUND ITS MOST APPALLING EXPRESSION IN THE PREMEDITATED EXTERMINATION OF MORE THAN SIX MILLION JEWS, SOMETHING UNPRECEDENTED IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND.

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

9/18

PRECISELY AT A TIME WHEN THE WORLD COMMEMORATES THE **60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU** AND OTHER EXTERMINATION CAMPS, THE CÓRDOBA CONFERENCE OFFERS US A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO **RENEW OUR STRUGGLE** AGAINST ANTISEMITISM IN ALL ITS FORMS. IN DOING SO, WE MUST START ON THE BASIS OF A REALITY WHICH DISMAYS US: UNFORTUNATELY, FAR FROM HAVING ULTIMATELY CLEANSED OUR SOCIETIES, **EXPERIENCE AND THE MEMORY OF THE HOLOCAUST HAVE NOT BEEN SUFFICIENT** TO END ATTITUDES AND MANIFESTATIONS WHICH CLEARLY ASSAULT THE DIGNITY OF JEWS.

RESPECT AND TOLERANCE DO NOT FLOWER SPONTANEOUSLY. **THEY REQUIRE SPECIFIC MEASURES AND GENUINE COMMITMENTS.** WE DO NOT NEED DECLARATIONS BUT RATHER SPECIFIC DECISIONS IN THE FIELD OF

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

10/18

EDUCATION, IN THE USE OF THE MEDIA OR IN THE STUDY OF HISTORY. IT MAKES NO SENSE TO CONDEMN AND REGRET IF THERE ARE NO FURTHER MEASURES MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO REPEAT CRIMINAL OR SHOCKING ACTS. AN INSULT AGAINST A PERSON'S RACE, RELIGION OR ETHNIC ORIGIN DOES NOT JUST SERIOUSLY OFFEND ONE PERSON, BUT SOWS THE SEED OF INJUSTICE AND POSSIBLE EXTENSIONS OF THE AFFRONT.

IN THIS SENSE, I AM PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE **CONFERENCE AGENDA WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE** TO EXAMINE PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THE **MEASURES BEING TAKEN TO FIGHT ANTISEMITISM**, USING AMONG OTHER TOOLS **EDUCATION, THE MEDIA AND THE WORK OF THE PUBLIC POWERS.**

MR. PRESIDENT,

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

11/18

THE FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM WILL FORM A MAJOR PART OF THE WORK OF THESE TWO DAYS. HOWEVER, THE CÓRDOBA **CONFERENCE** WILL ALSO ENABLE PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO BE GIVEN TO **OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION**. THAT SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS AN INTENTION TO CREATE HIERARCHIES. **ALL FORMS OF INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION ARE TO BE CONDEMNED** AS ASSAULTS ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE EQUALITY OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS. NONETHELESS, **EACH CATEGORY OF INTOLERANCE IS UNIQUE IN TERMS OF ITS ORIGIN AND EXPRESSIONS, AND MAY REQUIRE PARTICULAR ATTENTION, DEPENDING ON CIRCUMSTANCES.**

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CHRISTIANS AND THE MEMBERS OF OTHER RELIGIONS WILL FOR THE FIRST TIME TAKE UP ONE OF OUR WORKING SESSIONS. I TRUST THAT MEASURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS WILL

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

12/18

EMERGE TO ACCOMMODATE THE RELIGIONS FACET OF OUR DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES AND GUARANTEE ITS PUBLIC OR PRIVATE EXPRESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW.

THE SAME COULD BE SAID OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RACISM, XENOPHOBIA, INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION. ANY DISCRIMINATION FOR REASONS AMONG OTHERS OF RACE, SEX, LANGUAGE, IDEOLOGY OR SOCIAL STATUS, IS UNACCEPTABLE. I WISH IN THIS SENSE TO RESTATE HERE **MY GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE FIGHT AGAINST INEQUALITY FOR REASONS OF GENDER.** THE MEASURES TAKEN IN SPAIN AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE AND TO FAVOUR THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN WORK AND IN SOCIETY ARE AT THE FOREFRONT OF INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS, AND I THINK CAN PROVIDE A REFERENCE FOR OTHER SOCIETIES IN OUR SHARED DRIVE TO ERADICATE AN AGE-OLD AND PARTICULARLY

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

13/18

PERNICIOUS FORM OF DISCRIMINATION AFFECTING MORE THAN HALF OF
MANKIND.

BECAUSE OF THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES, I WISH TO
HIGHLIGHT ESPECIALLY THE CONSIDERATION GIVEN IN A FORMAL SESSION,
FOR THE FIRST TIME AT AN OSCE CONFERENCE TO **DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST MUSLIMS**. THIS IS AN **EMERGING PROBLEM** ASSOCIATED WITH
THE GROWING PRESENCE OF COMMUNITIES OF MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS IN
MANY OF OUR SOCIETIES. FACILITATING THEIR INTEGRATION, RESPECTING
CULTURAL DIVERSITY, IS ONE OF THE MOST RELEVANT CHALLENGES AND
OPPORTUNITIES WE MUST TAKE ON AT PRESENT. UNFORTUNATELY,
OFTEN, THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION DOES NOT FACILITATE
THAT TASK. **IT IS TOO EASY FOR SOME TO FALL INTO THE TRAP OF**

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

14/18

**IDENTIFYING ISLAM AND ITS ADHERENTS WITH INTOLERANCE, AND EVEN
WITH THE TERRORISM WHICH ASSAULTS US.**

ONCE AGAIN, CÓRDOBA AND MAIMÓNIDES OFFER US AN EXAMPLE
AND A FRAME OF REFERENCE. TO THOSE ASSERTING THAT ISLAM IS
INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE VALUES OF TOLERANCE AND DIALOGUE, **THERE IS
NO BETTER RESPONSE THAN TO RECALL THAT SPAIN OF THE THREE
CULTURES, WHOSE LIVING LEGACY TODAY RECEIVES US.**

IN THIS SENSE, A MAJOR CHALLENGE AWAITS THIS COUNTRY:
ACCUSTOMED TO EMIGRATE IN THE SEARCH FOR BREAD TO SECURE THE
FAMILY, IT IS NOW OUR TURN TO RECEIVE IMMIGRANTS WHO, FOR THE
SAME REASON, HAVE ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES IN OUR SOCIETY. THE
TRUTH IS THAT, ON THE FIRST MAJOR OCCASION WHEN IT WAS UNHAPPILY

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

15/18

PUT TO THE TEST, **SPANISH SOCIETY HAS, FOLLOWING THE TERRIBLE ATTACKS OF 11 MARCH 2004, DEMONSTRATED GREAT MATURITY.** FAR FROM A MASSIVE REJECTION OF MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS OR ISLAM, THE SPANISH PEOPLE WERE ABLE TO REACT WITH THE ADOPTION OF MEASURES TO ENHANCE THEIR INTEGRATION, BASED ON MUTUAL RESPECT AND OUR SHARED STANDARDS OF COEXISTENCE.

IN THIS SAME SPIRIT, INTERNATIONALLY THIS GOVERNMENT IS PROMOTING AN INITIATIVE DESIGNED TO CREATE AN **ALLIANCE OF CIVILISATIONS** BETWEEN THE WEST AND THE ARAB WORLD AND ISLAM. THIS INITIATIVE HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL AND BY THE ARAB LEAGUE, AND IS AT THE STAGE WHERE IT IS BEING MADE MORE SPECIFIC.

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

16/18

ALONG THE SAME LINES, OF USING THE CHANNELS OF **EFFECTIVE MULTILATERALISM**, MAY I REMIND YOU THAT THIS YEAR WE CELEBRATE THE **X ANNIVERSARY OF THE EUROMEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE OF BARCELONA**. THIS IS A MOST **FORTUNATE COINCIDENCE**, BECAUSE THE BARCELONA PROCESS IS LARGELY DRIVE BY THE VERY EXPERIENCE OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, THE ORIGINS OF THE OSCE, AND IN THE HELSINKI CHARTER, WHOSE 30TH ANNIVERSARY IS ALSO CELEBRATED THIS YEAR.

MR. PRESIDENT,

I CANNOT END WITHOUT MENTION OF ANOTHER EXCEPTIONAL COMMEMORATION. AS YOU KNOW, THIS YEAR IS THE **400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUBLICATION OF DON QUIXOTE**, THE SUMMIT OF SPANISH AND

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

17/18

UNIVERSAL LITERATURE. IN THIS WORK, CERVANTES' IMMORTAL CHARACTERS FEEL FOR THEMSELVES THE PAINS AND LOSSES OF THE JEWISH POPULATION AND YEARN FOR SPAIN, THE LOST NATURAL MOTHERLAND OF THE MOORS AND OTHER DISCRIMINATED OR EXPELLED PEOPLES. TODAY, SPAIN AND CÓRDOBA BECOME ONCE MORE THE NATURAL LAND OF THOSE WHO, THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO ITS ENRICHING DIVERSITY.

THUS, THE **SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAS MADE TOLERANCE, NON-DISCRIMINATION AND DIALOGUES ITS MAIN ENSIGNS**. IT IS PARTICULARLY PLEASING TO SEE THAT THESE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES ARE SHARED IN FULL BY THE ORGANISATION WE BELONG TO. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO PROCLAIM THEM. WE MUST BE VIGILANT, AND FIGHT EACH DAY FOR THEM. I HOPE WE WILL DO SO IN CÓRDOBA.

Date: 08-06-2005

OPENING CEREMONY, OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTISEMITISM AND
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE (CORDOBA)

18/18

MANY THANKS, AND I NOW GIVE THE FLOOR TO MR. PRESIDENT.