

**II OSCE CONGRESS ON ANTISEMITISM
BERLIN, 28TH/ 29TH APRIL 2004**

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF SPAIN OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND COOPERATION,
H.E. MR. MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS.**

MR. CHAIRMAN,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

1. IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME TO COME BACK TO BERLIN. IT IS JUST FOR A FEW DAYS THAT I HAVE HAD THE HONOUR TO HOLD THE POSITION OF MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION OF SPAIN, AND I WANTED TO PARTICIPATE PERSONALLY IN THIS CONFERENCE IN ORDER TO EMPHASIZE THE SUPPORT OF MY GOVERNMENT AND MYSELF TO THE WORK OF THE OSCE IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS, THE SEARCH FOR TOLERANCE AND ITS FIGHT AGAINST RACISM, XENOPHOBIA AND DISCRIMINATION, AND ESPECIALLY, ON THIS OCCASION, IN THE COMBAT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM.
2. LET MY FIRST WORDS BE FOR THIS REASON TO CONGRATULATE OUR GERMAN HOSTS, IN PARTICULAR, MY DEAR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE, MR. JOSCHKA FISCHER, AND HIS TEAM; THE BULGARIAN CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE AND ALL THOSE WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE ORGANISATION OF THIS SECOND OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTI-SEMITISM.
3. PHENOMENA SUCH AS RACISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM ARE LIKE WEED THAT IT IS INDISPENSABLE TO UPROOT. WHEN THEY BEGIN TO SHELTER IN THE HEART OF SOCIETIES, THEY NOT ONLY FINISH BY BEARING UNDESIRABLE FRUIT IN PRACTICALLY ALL SOCIAL REALMS, INCLUDING THE MAINTENANCE OR ACHIEVEMENT OF SECURITY, BUT THEY DESTROY THE VERY ESSENCE OF THE SOCIETIES THAT HAVE ALLOWED THEM TO DEVELOP. IN A NUTSHELL, THEY MAKE US AND OUR SOCIETIES LESS HUMAN.
4. OUR ORGANISATION, THAT HAS BEEN A PIONEER IN DEVELOPING OF A COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPT OF SECURITY, IS AWARE THAT, IN ORDER TO CONFRONT THE NEW THREATS AND CHALLENGES TO SECURITY AND STABILITY IN THE XXI CENTURY, IT IS NECESSARY TO OPERATE IN MANY DIFFERENT FRONTS. THE FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS AMONG THEM A PRIDE OF PLACE. IN THIS RESPECT, IT IS ESPECIALLY URGENT TO COMBAT INTOLERANCE AND, IN THIS FRAMEWORK, TO FIGHT THE SCOURGE OF ANTI-SEMITISM.

MY PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE ALLOWS ME TO KNOW TO WHAT POINT ANTI-SEMITISM IS HARMFUL FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ANY PROJECT THAT, AS THAT OF OSCE, HAS AS GOAL THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION.

- 5.- SPAIN, A COUNTRY THAT HAS AMONG HER MAIN PRIORITIES THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EUROPEAN SPACE OF JUSTICE AND FREEDOM, FIRMLY SUPPORTS THE EFFORTS OF THE OSCE TO EQUIP ITSELF WITH THE MECHANISMS AND CONCRETE MEASURES FOR THE PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND PROTECTION AGAINST THIS PHENOMENON. WE WILL ACTIVELY COOPERATE TO THIS AIM IN COORDINATION WITH THE DIFFERENT EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS AND ESPECIALLY WITH THE ODIHR. I WOULD LIKE TO REMIND YOU THAT IT WAS A GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY WHO INTRODUCED IN OUR CRIMINAL CODE IN 1995 ANTISEMITISM AS A CRIME. IN THE SAME VEIN, I HAVE DECIDED, IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE THE FOLLOW UP OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THIS CONFERENCE, TO CREATE A WORKING GROUP WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

MOREOVER, OUR COUNTRY WOULD LIKE TO UNDERSCORE ITS VERY SPECIAL COMMITMENT AND, FOR THIS REASON, IT IS MY GREAT PLEASURE TO ANNOUNCE THE WILLINGNESS OF SPAIN TO ORGANISE AND HOLD THE NEXT OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTI-SEMITISM, IN THE EVENT THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL DECIDES TO FOLLOW UP ON IT IN SUCH A WAY. CORDOBA, THE CITY OF MY CONSTITUENCY, THAT CELEBRATES

THIS YEAR THE 800 ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF MAIMONIDES, WOULD BE A SYMBOLIC PLACE TO HOST THIS CONGRESS.

6.- IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT NGO'S AND CIVIL SOCIETY AT LARGE ARE NOWADAYS AN ESSENTIAL ALLY OF GOVERNMENT IN EVERY POLICY SECTOR. TODAY, AS IT IS TRADITIONAL IN ALL THE MEETING OF OUR ORGANIZATION, SOME OF THE MOST QUALIFIED PERSONALITIES IN THE COMBAT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM ARE ATTENDING THIS CONFERENCE. THE INVOLVEMENT OF NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT WHEN YOU TRY TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE AMONG DIFFERENT GROUPS AND TO COMBAT INTOLERANT PHENOMENA IN FIELDS SUCH AS EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT. AN EVER INCREASING AWARENESS BY SOCIETY AT LARGE, TOGETHER WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE MASS MEDIA LEADS NECESSARILY TO A BETTER DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND TO REINFORCE THE INSTITUTIONS TO THE INSTITUTIONS DEVOTED TO THEIR DEFENCE. THIS IS THE BEST GUARANTEE, NOT ONLY FOR A CLIMATE OF TOLERANCE TO FLOURISH, BUT ALSO TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RULES AND INSTRUMENTS THAT ALLOW FOR A QUICK AND EFFECTIVE REACTION AGAINST ANY TYPE OF RACIST OR ANTI-SEMITIC BEHAVIOUR.

7.- THE INSTITUTION OF THE OMBUDSMAN PLAYS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN THIS RESPECT. IN SPAIN THE OMBUDSMAN ENJOYS A PARTICULARLY WIDE MANDATE. THIS INSTITUTION HAS EARNED THROUGHOUT THE LAST YEARS A WELL DESERVED PRESTIGE. THE OMBUDSMAN HAS PROVED TO KNOW HOW TO RESPOND TO THE DEMANDS AND PROBLEMS OF THE SOCIETY THANKS TO A PARTICULARLY AGILE, FLEXIBLE AND UNBUCROCRATIC ATTITUDE, BY IMMEDIATELY RELAYING TO GOVERNMENT THE CITIZENS' COMPLAINTS IN ORDER TO REQUEST FROM IT A BETTER PERFORMANCE SO THAT IT BETTER REFLECTS THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE CITIZENS. IT IS MY SPECIAL PLEASURE THAT OUR OMBUDSMAN, MR. ENRIQUE MÚGICA HERZOG, WHOSE INDIVIDUAL CAREER IN THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM IS WELL KNOWN TO MANY OF YOU, HAS ACCEPTED MY INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS CONFERENCE.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

8.- THE COMBAT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM, AND, IN GENERAL, AGAINST RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION, IS AN ESSENTIAL TASK TO PROTECT THE VALUES OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM THAT CONSTITUTE OUR MOST PROFOUND IDENTITY. WE CANNOT JUST CROSS OUR ARMS, LET ALONE TO LIMIT OURSELVES TO MAKE VAGUE STATEMENTS. WE HAVE TO ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT CONCRETE AND OPERATIONAL MEASURES, AS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EUROPEAN UNION POINTED OUT IN HIS INTERVENTION.

9.- THE NEED FOR ACTION IS A CHALLENGE TO ALL OF US, FOR GREAT PROBLEMS CAN ONLY BE TACKLED BY COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS ROOTED PRECISELY IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF WHICH THIS CONFERENCE IS A VERY GOOD EXAMPLE. IT IS ONLY IN THIS WAY THAT WE WILL BE IN A POSITION TO FACE UP TO THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY.

MR CHAIRMAN,

10. LET ME FINISH BY REITERATING MY SUPPORT TO THE OSCE'S PRACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL APPROACH AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM, AND BY REPEATING THE COMMITMENT OF MY COUNTRY TO DO OUR UTMOST IN THIS TASK.

MR. CHAIRMAN, DEAR FRIENDS,

THE XXI CENTURY IN WHICH WE HAVE TO LIVE AND OF WHICH WE WILL BE INEVITABLY RESPONSIBLE, WILL BE A CENTURY OF COEXISTENCE... OR WILL NOT BE.

IN IT, THE COMBAT AGAINST THE SO CALLED "HATE CRIMES" IN GENERAL AND, VERY SPECIALLY, AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM, IT IS THE ESSENTIAL DUTY OF OUR DEMOCRACIES SOCIETIES. OUR SOCIETIES, SHOULD THEY TO LOSE WHAT MARTIN BUBER CALLED THE "COMMUNITY ESSENCE" BASED IN THE FULL RESPECT OF THE "OTHER", WOULD THEN TRANSFORM THEMSELVES IN FUTILE PROJECTS OF COEXISTENCE, BOUND TO FAILURE.

LET US MAKE OURS THE WORDS OF SAINT-EXUPERY'S OURS AND I WILL FINISH WITH THEM: "FRÈRE, TA DIFFÉRENCE, LOIN DE ME LÉSER, M'ENRICHIT".

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.