

# **Palabras de Su Majestad el Rey en el Parlamento del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte**

Palacio de Westminster. Londres, 12.07.2017

Please allow me to begin by expressing my gratitude for the extraordinary honour of addressing the British Parliament, as part of our State Visit to the United Kingdom.

This Parliament has embodied the principles of freedom, democracy and the rule of law for centuries, as have few other institutions in the world; principles which form the foundations on which the political and constitutional structures of the most developed countries have been built.

The Palace of Westminster is a symbol of the British people's commitment to the cause of freedom.

In the darkest years of the past century, this Parliament faced the threat of totalitarian aggression with great strength of character, as did the people of Britain. Their determination and their faith in victory became a model of morality to be followed and a beacon of hope for generations of Europeans.

The same strength of character, determination and faith in victory will lead freedom, time after time, to triumph over any form of extremist or fanatical ideology, which resorts to violence and terrorism, and today threatens people's lives and their dignity.

Therefore, in defence of democracy and the civic and political values that form the basis of our peaceful coexistence, I wish to recognize and praise the dignity the British people have shown when faced with the cowardly terrorist violence that has recently struck this beloved nation.

Today, in this House -which was also her house-, I wish to honour the memory of the Right Honourable Jo Cox, who was savagely murdered one year ago. I would also like warmly to recall, from the bottom of our hearts, the other victims of attacks and their families. Among these, I must remember policeman Keith Palmer, who died defending this Parliament. Nor should we forget all citizens from different nations massacred in these barbaric assaults. As well, I would like to pay tribute to the Spanish citizen, Ignacio Echeverría, who, along with many others, British or not, behaved in an exemplary and heroic manner during the attacks.

I take this opportunity, in this House, to convey my solidarity with the British people, and the solidarity of all of Spain. You can be sure of the unwavering affection of the Spanish people. We are your loyal friends and allies. Every craven terrorist attack is an attack on every one of us; because the victims belong to all of us, no matter their origin, race, religion or condition; we owe them, and their families, our utmost respect, gratitude and unswerving determination.

Honourable Members of Parliament, My Lords,  
Before you, the representatives of the British nation, I also wish to pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, in this year of Her Sapphire Jubilee. Her Majesty is a key figure in the history of this great nation.

Patriotism, statesmanship, devotion to her subjects and enduring commitment to service have marked her reign for the benefit of all of the citizens of the United Kingdom.

Like other nations whose form of government is a Parliamentary Monarchy, the United Kingdom has achieved renowned levels of democratic, economic and social development, and Queen Elizabeth has embodied and upheld this Parliamentary Monarchy in an extraordinary manner since Her coronation. Her Majesty has been and remains an example around the world.

For all these reasons, Honourable Members of Parliament and My Lords, please allow me to congratulate you and all of your people on your admirable Queen.

Ladies and gentlemen,  
The United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Spain may have different forms of government; our systems of law may have different origins and means of application; our Constitutions may be written or unwritten; however, we have shared a great deal and continue to do so.

We are two of the oldest nations in Europe, and in the world. We are Parliamentary Monarchies based on a vocation and firm commitment to the plurality and diversity that enrich our societies.

We have been the two major worldwide empires that stretched across the Atlantic, with a global vision. Our languages are today the main means of international communication. In short, we have a shared history and we are united today by the strong bonds of personal esteem and affection between our societies.

Furthermore we share respect for national sovereignty and the law, established through democratic process, which is the cornerstone of any State under the rule of law, guaranteeing the peaceful and harmonious coexistence of our citizens.

In the spirit of these principles, I stand before this Parliament, with great pride, representing the modern, democratic nation of Spain, which is fully integrated into the international community; a nation with a profound commitment to universal questions and an undeniable engagement in Europe, the Mediterranean and Ibero-America.

In April 1986, 31 years ago, my father, King Juan Carlos I, was the first Spanish monarch to address this eminent institution, underscoring the rich shared history of the Crowns of the United Kingdom and Spain.

Three decades later, I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the exceptional ties which have bound the Spanish and British Crowns and continue to do so. Almost half a millennium ago, another Felipe of Spain, namely Felipe II, was proclaimed King of England by marriage to Queen Mary Tudor, and before him, Eleanor of Castile and Catherine of Aragon embodied the dynastic alliance that bound the destinies of our two

nations for centuries. And in our days, I am also proud to be a descendent of Queen Victoria.

Spain and England, the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom, have indeed a long shared history, during which we have frequently stood shoulder to shoulder. We have done so as friends, as partners and as allies, either facing international challenges together, or by promoting a closer relationship between our institutions and citizens, in the best interests of our two societies.

It is just as true, however, that during our rich and fruitful history there have also been estrangements, rivalries and disputes, but the work and determination of our governments, authorities and citizens have relegated such events to the past. I am certain that this resolve to overcome our differences will be even greater in the case of Gibraltar, and I am confident that through the necessary dialogue and effort, our two governments will be able to work towards arrangements that are acceptable to all involved.

Honourable Members of Parliament, My Lords,  
Until the present, the United Kingdom and Spain have both been partners in the project of European integration, which has brought considerable stability and prosperity to the region, one that may be said to be unprecedented in history. This project has also helped to enhance the existing rich fabric of bilateral relations between partners, like in the case of our two nations, where bilateral relations have in fact reached a pinnacle in our shared history.

The UK, exercising its sovereignty and its constitutional law, has decided to leave the European Union following the procedure established in the Treaties. Although this decision may sadden us —and indeed it does— we fully respect your will.

The British government's intentions to remain a strategic ally of the Union and to continue to play a decisive role in the security of Europe and the prosperity of its citizens, offers us great hope.

At the bilateral level, our governments must work with determination to maintain and even improve the network of relations we have built within the European project. This is something that our societies —which are so profoundly intertwined— truly demand of us.

Given these circumstances, we must particularly bear in mind the thousands of Britons and Spaniards who live in each of our nations, who form a sound foundation for our relations.

These citizens have a legitimate expectation of decent and stable living conditions, for themselves and for their families. I therefore urge our two governments to continue working to ensure that the agreement on the UK's withdrawal from the EU provides sufficient assurance and certainty.

The shared aims of the United Kingdom and Spain —partners and allies on the global stage—, are reflected in our two nations' close cooperation at the highest international levels. We should all take pride in this work, which demonstrates that the international

community benefits from the combined efforts of the people of Britain and Spain, and that it can always rely on our mutual collaboration.

In particular, I wish to express my sincere respect for the men and women of the armed forces of the United Kingdom and Spain, who, either in UN peacekeeping operations; or as members of NATO; or under the aegis of the EU, risk their lives to defend a freer and safer world.

We cooperate in the Global Coalition against Daesh; in operations to support peace and security in Afghanistan; in Operation Sophia, to combat trafficking of migrants in the Mediterranean; in the fight against piracy in Somalia as part of Operation Atalanta; and in the campaign to promote stability and development in a region ravaged by terrorism, piracy and organized crime, within the Friends of the Gulf of Guinea.

Indeed, in today's globalized and interconnected world, international threats and challenges ignore all borders. This is why the work of the men and women of our armed forces around the world is crucial to peace, security and freedom for our societies; as is the work of our security forces, and intelligence agencies, which cooperate closely to guarantee our safety, to combat terrorism and to prevent criminal activities.

Honourable Members of Parliament, My Lords,  
I cannot continue without mentioning the strong yet flexible ties between our peoples, perhaps the closest in Europe. They are testimony to the enormous momentum that defines our bilateral relations over the past three decades.

As I mentioned, there are hundreds of thousands of British citizens in Spain and Spanish citizens in Britain; moreover, millions of British tourists travel to Spain every year. Our citizens undeniably exemplify our strongest bond: a bond of affection and personal ties.

This extremely rich relationship between our societies is matched by very rewarding economic and trade ties. Spain is one of Britain's primary export markets, and the United Kingdom is the second-largest investor in Spain. In turn, the United Kingdom is the primary destination for Spain's foreign investment, and the third most important export market in the world for Spanish goods and services.

Whether they operate in the banking industry, finance, transport, energy, construction, agriculture, technology or communications, Spanish companies —whatever their size— play a key role in the British economy; they all contribute to the growth of this nation, generating wealth and creating thousands of jobs.

Through cutting-edge technology, excellence and know-how, these leading companies have been able to firmly establish themselves in the demanding British market. In this regard, the United Kingdom's ambitious plan to modernize and extend its transport networks has created excellent opportunities in infrastructure. This has bolstered trade, technological exchanges and cooperation between British and Spanish companies and has expanded the capacities for transport by air, sea, road and rail. There are, indeed, many outstanding examples of this fruitful contribution.

Sin duda, otro rasgo que nos acerca al Reino Unido y a España es el orgullo que sentimos por nuestra historia, nuestra cultura y nuestras lenguas. El inglés y el español,

las dos principales lenguas de comunicación internacional, resultan esenciales para abarcar la complejidad del mundo moderno. Ambas demuestran una extraordinaria vitalidad que les permite seguir creciendo como herramientas fundamentales de comunicación, sea en la cultura, en los negocios o en el mundo del ocio.

Esta vitalidad hunde sus raíces en una larga historia. En 2016 conmemoramos el cuarto centenario del fallecimiento de Shakespeare y de Cervantes, forjadores respectivamente del teatro y de la novela modernos. Ambos autores son potentes símbolos de nuestra afinidad cultural y están en los cimientos de los intensos intercambios intelectuales, artísticos, culturales y deportivos que mantenemos en la actualidad y que tanto enriquecen a nuestras dos Naciones.

Esa positiva combinación de historia y tradición, y de vitalidad contemporánea, se da igualmente en las universidades españolas y británicas, algunas de las cuales se cuentan entre las más antiguas del mundo. Hoy siguen siendo no solo centros de educación, sino auténticas referencias del saber, del conocimiento científico y de la cultura humanista en todas sus dimensiones.

El nivel de interrelación entre nuestros países en el ámbito de la ciencia es muy elevado. Profesores y científicos británicos, españoles y de muchos otros lugares realizan aportaciones fundamentales que redundan en la expansión del conocimiento y en el beneficio de nuestras sociedades. En este sentido, quiero también reconocer el mérito de los extraordinarios hispanistas británicos que han desarrollado una labor formidable durante tantos años, contribuyendo a elevar tanto el nivel de conocimiento y aprecio aquí por la historia y cultura de nuestro país, como la calidad de la investigación que sobre ella se ha realizado desde fuera. Ello ha generado un gran interés en la sociedad en general.

Honourable Members of Parliament, My Lords,  
Our two nations currently enjoy excellent bilateral relations, among the strongest in our history.

We now face the challenge of how to continue forward as partners, friends and allies under new circumstances, but always shoulder to shoulder, at the heart of a free, democratic and prosperous Europe.

I am certain that the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Spain will continue to work together and further the deep and meaningful friendship we have forged together, driven by a legacy of robust bonds and a desire to build a better future of wellbeing and progress for our citizens. Because –to conclude–, as my father King Juan Carlos I said in this same House, “We are two nations with every reason for understanding, support and affection”.

Thank you very much.