**Statement of the President of the Government of Spain in the High-Level Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals**

**New York, Monday September 20th, 2010**

**STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN**

**MR. JOSÉ LUIS RODRÍGUEZ ZAPATERO**

**HIGH-LEVEL MEETING**

**MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

This year we celebrate a special Summit, ten years after the nations of the world entered into an historical agreement: to achieve the reduction of the level of poverty and misery in 2015 to levels which are compatible with the conscience and dignity that are inherent to human beings.

Ten years on, we should thank the United Nations for such an initiative. It has represented the most clear and shared mobilisation in history in favour of the eradication of the major problem presented by poverty, misery, desperation and illiteracy that exist in so many corners of the world.

Ten years on, we have witnessed progress; not everything that we had hoped for, and not nearly as much as those countries that are most affected by the difficulties of poverty and misery deserve.

However, we now know, after ten years, that it is possible to achieve the goals in the next five years. We now know that if each and every country meets their goals, the level of progress will be substantial, decisive, and significant.

From among the developed countries, Spain is the country that has increased its development aid more than any other in the past five years. Spain has doubled the development aid during this period. Spain has become a leading donor within the United Nations set up, especially in the efforts toward food security, in the fight for gender equality and in the injustice that poverty almost always affects women more. And it is in the efforts in favour of women and the fight for equality of rights where we will truly be able to achieve the Millennium Goals.

Five years ahead of us and the important question is: what is needed? With what are we able to achieve the Millennium Goals? How are we able to fee proud, as a generation, when considering ourselves and when considering future generations? To be able to say in this great institution, in this common home, that is the house of peace, development and with the answers to the great crisis, that we were conscious of the historical challenge, that we joined together and that we understood, in the dawn of a new century, of this, the 21st Century, that nothing could represent progress, as human beings,  more than the achievement  of a situation in which there is nobody, not one single human being, that dies in a state of misery or extreme poverty; it is this that would be the most significant advance that we could achieve in this period.

How can we do this? With two conditions: the first, that our countries maintain their efforts and pressure in favour of development aid, in spite of the crisis, that will lead us to reduce the significant increases in aid that we have seen. But this reduction will be a temporary and interim reduction. Spain maintains its goal of reaching 0.7 per cent of development aid by 2015, after already having climbed in the past five years from 0.2 to 0.45 per cent.

The second condition: domestic efforts alone are not enough. Let's make this clear, in this tribunal, before all of the citizens of the world and all Governments of the world should clearly declare the same: that it is necessary to impose a duty over the international financial transactions aimed at meeting the Millennium Goals. And my Government undertakes to defend the same, to carry out the same and to apply the same before all of the relevant international forums.

The financial systems, that have experienced a significant crisis, have witnessed how our countries have supported them and come to their rescue. Well, it would seem fair, just and logical that the countries, our nations, demand a minimum effort from the functioning of the financial system so that we are able to alleviate misery and extreme poverty for millions and millions of human beings, and that in 2015 we are able to come together being able to say: we achieved the goal and fulfilled our commitment; our combined efforts have been worthwhile.

That is the second condition. First, that our countries continue to maintain their development aid efforts; second, that we put in motion innovative sources of finance in order to meet the Millennium Goals, and the clearest, most direct manner, is a duty applied to international financial transactions. Spain commits to this and will defend the same at the G-20, before the European Union, the OECD and before all of the multilateral bodies so that an international agreement may allow that all persons, NGOs and individual citizens, that in this world can look toward this institution and toward the Governments of the world and say: the time has finally arrived. We can, with a little effort from all parties within the international financial system arena, meet the Millennium Goals, eradicate world poverty and misery. We have to do it, and we are going to do it.

Thank you.

Government of Spain

