



October 30, 2008

Senator Barack Obama
Washington D.C.

cc: H.E. Jorge Dezcallar, Ambassador of Spain to the US.
H.E. Eduardo Aguirre, US Ambassador to Spain.
Ms. Elena Valenciano, International Relations Director, PSOE.
Mr. Jorge Moragas, International Relations Director, Popular Party.

Dear Senator Obama

We are writing to you on behalf of the Spain Study Group (www.spainstudygroup.com) regarding the exclusion of Spain from the upcoming International Conference on the Economic Crisis to be held in Washington, D.C. this coming 15th of November.

The Spain Study Group is a serious project founded by Miami conscientious residents representing different walks of life --university professors, entrepreneurs, political activists and professionals with a shared affinity for Spain. The group has affiliates in various parts of the world. The Group has as a sole mission the reflection, deep thinking and sharing of basic information and relevant facts, scholarly research and independent opinion on current Spain, its history, and its place in today's Europe and its relations with the Americas. The tasks of the Group intend to reach beyond stereotypes, superficial analysis, and slanted partisan views.

As you well know, Spain is a committed ally of the United States. Since its accession to the European Union and NATO, Spain has reached considerable levels of world influence, international respect, and domestic political consolidation. Economic and social development has converted the country into the second immigration destination, surpassed only by the United States. In turn, Spain's foreign direct investment is the leading financial contributor in several Latin American countries. Spanish officials serve in high positions at the UN, the EU, and other world-wide organizations. Spanish troops contribute to pacification and peacekeeping missions around the world. The Spanish language has become "the second-second language of the world" --more people study Spanish than any other language, except English. Hispanics are today the largest minority in the United States. Spain is today the 8th world economy. Spain, in sum, has become a key world player.

UK Prime Minister Brown and French President Sarkozy, among other International leaders, have expressed unconditional endorsement for Spain's attendance to the Conference. However, in spite of Spain's position in the world, we understand that the exclusion of Spain from the Conference is the result of the policies towards Spain executed by the Bush administration. The origin of this decision was the implementation by President Zapatero of his electoral promise to withdraw Spanish troops from Iraq. As you well know, this war was extremely unpopular in Europe and especially in Spain. By honoring his promise, President Zapatero not only respected the will of the vast majority of the Spanish population, but made good what should be a basic principle of democratic policies, which is to honor electoral promises.

The Spain Study Group intends to work across partisan views. However, regrettably the attitude shown by Senator McCain towards Spain, as revealed on your second Electoral Debate, as that of persistent Bush policies, has prevented us from addressing this issue to Senator McCain. We, as citizens of the United States, are concerned that the U.S. international policy be perceived as based on personal likes and dislikes, as opposed to solid historical ties and the best national interest. We also find the presidential decision to reflect a negative attitude towards the more 45 million Spaniards and many citizens in other parts of the world that feel connected to Spain.

We look forward to your election to the Presidency of the United States on this coming Tuesday and we urge you to show support for the Spanish presence in the Conference. We firmly believe that by showing your endorsement you could redress the current situation and could definitely lead to a firmer and better alliance between both countries.

Respectfully yours,

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