

(Portada/Front Cover)

**The Programme
for the Spanish Presidency
of the European Union Council**

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Innovating Europe

Spain takes on the Presidency of the Council of the European Union on January 1st, 2010, a strategic moment for Europe.

The entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon opens up a new period in which we have an appropriate legal framework to set into motion the Europe we need: a stronger, more united and more efficient Europe to respond to citizens' concerns. We should now consolidate the incipient economic recovery, turn Europe into a true global player in the international sphere, and make the Union finally take root in the will of those who render it legitimate: European citizens.

Within this context, Spain will exercise the Presidency with a firm will to reinforce and transform the Union. It is about innovating Europe.

The Spanish Presidency's main responsibility will be to guarantee full enforcement of the Treaty of Lisbon, as an essential requirement to develop the fundamental lines of action we have set forth for the next six-month period.

Secondly, we intend to address the challenge of fostering the economic recovery following a path of sustainable growth that generates employment. To this end, we aim at boosting the coordination of domestic economic policies, a coordination that has already proven essential in fighting against recession and which should now be strengthened ahead of the new EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy. The Treaty provides instruments to make headway in this coordination and we shall take advantage of them.

The Treaty of Lisbon also offers the possibility to develop a Common Foreign and Security Policy so that Europe can assert its voice, values and interests in the international arena and foster efficient multilateralism to move forward toward a fairer, more peaceful and balanced global order.

However, the Union will only grow stronger –as we envisage– if it is eventually capable of building closeness with its citizens and obtaining their support and participation. Their rights as Europeans, their freedom and their security should thus be heightened and equality between men and women made effective.

These are the four priorities upon which the Spanish Presidency Programme is based:

- Full implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon.
- Coordination of economic policies to promote recovery and sustainable growth throughout Europe: launching of Europe 2020.
- Strengthening of the European Union's foreign policy to turn it into a real global player.
- Fostering a Europe of rights and freedoms at the service of citizens.

These priorities are framed within the Trio of Presidency consisting of Spain, Belgium and Hungary, which will follow Spain during the two subsequent six-month periods, and will continue the work developed by Sweden, as former Presidency of the Council. In addition, they have been subject to consultations in the European Parliament and established pursuant to the new Commission's work programme.

The initiatives put forward in the forthcoming months will be enhanced by the analysis and proposals made by the Reflection Group, which should submit its conclusions report in the horizon of the 2020-2030 period.

This work programme addresses, first, the political approach of the four main priorities and, then, thoroughly explains the different operational objectives for each of the Council areas.

I. FAST AND FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TREATY OF LISBON

The Treaty of Lisbon entered into force on December 1st, 2009. It is the result of a long process of negotiations with a successful conclusion thanks to the shared efforts of Governments, European institutions and citizens. It is now up to us to firmly and rigorously implement it. This is the Spanish Presidency's main responsibility; its fundamental priority, upon which all the others hinge.

The citizens of Europe should notice as soon as possible that the Union has begun a new period.

1. Setting into motion the new European Union Institutions

Spain will fully support all the new High Positions so they can exercise their competencies under the best possible conditions. Furthermore, it will take on the corresponding role as rotating Presidency in the institutional structure established by the Treaty.

We also undertake to consolidate a balanced and European-bound practice in those aspects related to the new institutions not included therein or in its provisions.

As a transitional Presidency, it is our responsibility to make up for some temporary deficiencies of the new institutions. We shall do so in close coordination with them and with a view to addressing such limitations as soon as possible.

We shall direct the different areas of the Council and we shall collaborate with the President of the European Council to establish the agenda, make decisions and draw conclusions.

We shall foster ongoing cooperation with the High Representative, specifically in connection with those areas linked to foreign relations, which will remain under the responsibility of the rotating Presidency, such as the enlargement policy, trade or legal and domestic affairs.

In direct coordination with the President of the European Council and the High Representative, we contribute to the success of the Summits with third countries foreseen for the coming six months: Spain has made great efforts in organizing them.

We shall also collaborate on a permanent basis with the new European Commission and the European Parliament, both being the cornerstone of the new institutional scheme. Furthermore, in agreement with it, we shall foster the prompt incorporation to the Parliament of the additional members.

2. Launching the European External Action Service

The Treaty of Lisbon lays the foundations for the creation of the European External Action Service, the instrument geared to provide further coherence and efficiency to the European Union's external action.

The creation of this Service, consisting of officials from the Commission, the Council's General Secretariat and Member States, also shows the Union's intention to reinforce its high intrinsic importance in the international arena.

It will be the responsibility of the Spanish Presidency to collaborate with the High Representative and the European Parliament to promote the enactment of the necessary legal rules to establish the European External Action Service and ensure its rapid implementation.

The Spanish Presidency will guarantee the transition to this new design supporting the work of the High Representative with its entire diplomatic network until the deployment of the new European Service is settled, on a case by case basis.

3. The solidarity clause

The Treaty of Lisbon lays the necessary legal foundation for Member States and the European Union to provide mutual assistance in case of terrorist attack or natural or human disaster, occurred within the borders of the European Union.

This is an innovative instrument that will reinforce the protection of European citizens.

Its development requires a joint proposal by the European Commission and the High Representative, whose efforts will be fully backed by the Spanish Presidency.

II. ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND JOB CREATION: EUROPE 2020

The Spanish Presidency will be developed within a context of an emergent economic recovery following an unprecedented crisis, both in the European Union and the rest of the world.

The coordinated action of the European Union governments with measures supporting the financial sector and tax incentives (European Economic Recovery Plan), managed to stabilise financial markets and stop the free fall of the economic activity.

This coordination exercise at European level has enabled us to already witness the first signs of economic recovery. However, there is still uncertainty about the strength of this recovery and the capacity of the economies to extensively create jobs.

Against this backdrop, the purpose of the Spanish Presidency is to strengthen the economic recovery, resume the job creation path and move forward toward the sustainability of public finances through Member States' fiscal consolidation processes.

Likewise, the Spanish Presidency intends to lay the foundations for a more sustainable economic model, capable of successfully facing the structural challenges brought upon Europe (globalisation, climate change and ageing, among others), with better financial regulation and supervision.

Forging ahead in the coordination of rational economic policies is essential to achieve these objectives. With the approval of the Treaty of Lisbon, new instruments are available to strengthen this coordination of Member States and thus support a European economic policy. The Spanish Presidency will promote this coordination from the European Council in collaboration with the Commission and the Parliament.

Such coordination will be helpful to resume growth and render it more sustainable. Moreover, in the international arena, Europe will also have to lead and support the cooperation efforts within the G20.

1. Exiting the crisis

The economic recovery already underway should be further reinforced, closely following its evolution to avoid that it be jeopardised by an early withdrawal of both the financial sector's supporting measures and demand boosting measures.

In turn, the Spanish Presidency is fully aware of the need to withdraw these measures as soon as the economic situation may allow so, which should be carried out in a coordinated, orderly, transparent and gradual manner, according to common criteria as well as the macro-financial situation of each country.

Particularly, special attention should be placed on withdrawing fiscal support measures, since the crisis has considerably eroded the fiscal position of most Member States. The implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact will initiate the necessary fiscal consolidation processes for the EU public finances sustainability in the long run.

2. Towards sustainable and balanced growth: Europe 2020

The framing of a New Growth and Employment Strategy –“Europe 2020”– as a follow-up to the Lisbon Strategy will be the suitable coordination instrument to structure the new growth model we need.

The consideration of the New Strategy should lead to its implementation in the European Council in the Spring of 2010, with the support of all of the European institutions and social stakeholders.

In designing the New Strategy, the improvement of its governance should be especially considered to guarantee increased efficiency and commitment by Member States.

Likewise, special attention will be given to the Strategy's external dimension, setting forth the fight against protectionism and the conclusion of the Doha Round as objectives.

The New Strategy will emphasise the European economic model sustainability in three dimensions:

2.1) Economic sustainability: Europe competes in a globalised world with emerging economies that have strong comparative cost advantages. The European economy should base its comparative advantage on competitiveness, innovation and knowledge. The New Strategy should offer a renewed momentum to investment in research, development and innovation, for which the new European Innovation Plan will be crucial.

The Spanish Presidency will focus its efforts on promoting corporate R&D&I and technological development, intensifying the public sector's basic research and collaboration between the public and private sectors. Furthermore, it will focus on developing emerging technological sectors, implementing information technologies, and fostering SMEs' innovation.

2.2) Social sustainability: The effects of the crisis have particularly undermined the labour market. The New Strategy should render employment special attention, increasing participation, training and workers' employability to guarantee social inclusion. A labour force in tune with new sources of economic growth, fully involved in a modern labour market, is a guarantee for the sustainability of both the social model and the pension systems in Europe. In addition, we should definitely move forward toward labour equality between men and women, eliminating any form of discrimination.

In terms of education and training, the Spanish Presidency will promote the improvement of workers skills' adjustment to the labour market needs; it will ensure enhanced education quality, and will foster excellence in universities and professional training.

As to modernising the labour framework, balanced flexibility and security should be promoted, contributing to a more efficient operation of the labour market.

Furthermore, the Presidency will encourage the European Social Agenda to uphold the European social model.

2.3) Environmental sustainability: The European economy should finally move toward a low-emission economic model to fight against climate change and generate new sources of economic growth. This transition should include as fundamental objectives the reduction of CO₂ emissions, the use of renewable energies and increased energy efficiency.

Top priority will also be given to biodiversity preservation initiatives.

Environmental sustainability will be especially relevant for the European energy policy and the 2010-2014 Energy Plan, which will be adopted by the Spring European Council.

Europe should also have a coordinated energy supply strategy, reinforcing infrastructures to improve Member States' interconnection and diversifying energy sources.

3. Reform of the financial system's supervision

The new sustainable and balanced economic model calls for a more efficient European financial system. Increasing the quality of its regulation and supervision is, therefore, necessary, as well as furthering the financial system's integration. The Spanish Presidency will thus have the following four objectives in financial supervision:

3.1) Approval of the new European financial supervisory framework: The new system, endorsed by the Council in December 2009, will include the European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB), in charge of monitoring macro-financial risks, and the European System of Financial Supervisors, responsible for the micro-financial supervision of individual entities. The implementation of these two instruments will conclude in late 2010, so it will be the task of the Spanish Presidency to encourage negotiations with the Parliament for their full adoption.

3.2) Approval of the current regulatory reforms, among which the following should be highlighted: regulation of alternative investment fund managers (hedge funds and private equity entities); improvement of banks's capital adequacy and regulation of their remuneration policies; and simplification of the prospectus required for public offers of securities and for their admission to trading on regulated markets.

3.3) Framing of a joint European response in terms of crisis management: The financial crisis has evidenced the need to have harmonised instruments to face eventual cross-border banking crises. The Spanish Presidency aims at fostering new legal harmonising and coordinating measures in three areas, namely: early or preventive intervention, intervention of entities in trouble (and their financing), and bankruptcy matters derived from the liquidation of cross-border banks.

3.4) Implementation of the Commission's Financial Services priorities during the 2010-2015 period, describing the European financial policy priorities affecting the sector and which will result in a higher integration and better supervision of the European financial system.

III. EUROPE: A GLOBAL, RESPONSIBLE AND SUPPORTIVE PLAYER

1. A new period in European Foreign, Security and Cooperation Policy

Europe cannot miss the historic opportunity of assuming a relevant role in the configuration of the new international order. And the Treaty of Lisbon provides the necessary instruments to that end: so the European Union can strengthen its relations with its neighbours and strategic partners, consolidate its leadership in multilateral fora, assume its responsibility in conflicting areas and unfold its firm commitment in promoting peace, human rights defence and poverty eradication.

The objective is to reinforce the Union's unity of action, increase its visibility and develop a genuinely common foreign policy, with ambitious goals and effective actions.

The Spanish Presidency will closely collaborate with the President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to make the most of all the possibilities rendered by the new Treaty.

Smooth communication channels will also be established with the new positions to ensure the most dynamic response of the EU to the crises that might emerge in any potential scenario of conflict.

The Spanish Presidency will make a special effort to endorse the development of a Common Security and Defence Policy and for the EU to reinforce its role as an international referent in terms of crisis management. Along this line, work will continue to increase the Union's civil and military capabilities, specially boosting the work of the European Defence Agency.

In terms of cooperation for development, the Spanish Presidency will advocate for the observance of all international commitments regarding the fight against hunger and poverty, development financing and aid effectiveness. It will also work tirelessly on the implementation of an ambitious European policy with a view to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals Conference.

During its Presidency, Spain will also contribute to consolidate the privileged strategic relationship between the European Union and Africa, based on the renewed partnership whose foundation was laid at the Lisbon Summit.

The Union will play an increasingly growing role to promote an active and efficient multilateralism in resolving global problems, specifically, by reinforcing the United Nations system. The Spanish Presidency will give special relevance to the consolidation of the Human Rights Council and the abolition of the death penalty.

The Presidency will, furthermore, act in the fight against climate change in agreement with the global leadership taken by the Union on this issue.

Specifically, during the next six-month period, we shall be responsible for ensuring the strictest development of the agreement to be reached at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen.

Finally, the Spanish Presidency will foster the prompt conclusion of the commercial negotiations held within the framework of the WTO Doha Round.

2. A new dimension in relations with the United States and Canada

The Transatlantic Dialogue between the EU and the United States will be invigorated to consolidate a deeper and more integrated transatlantic market and a more visionary coordination to respond both to the main international issues and the global problems and challenges and, specifically, the fight against terrorism.

A new period to deepen the cooperation between the EU and Canada will be started with the same purposes.

3. A qualitative leap with Latin America and the Caribbean

Cooperation between two growingly relevant regions in the international scenario, such as the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean, should be buttressed. The Spanish Presidency wishes to bring about a true qualitative leap in this cooperation relation.

More specifically, we shall highlight the new strategic nature of the EU-Mexican relation and we shall advance the negotiations for the agreements with Central America, the Andean countries and the Mercosur.

4. Close and balanced neighbourhood relations

The prosperity and stability of Europe and the neighbouring regions are intertwined.

Spain will especially emphasise the defence of the unitary nature of the European neighbourhood policy and boost the balanced progress of its Mediterranean and Eastern dimensions.

Special heed will be taken to the progressive implementation of the advanced status of Morocco and the strengthening of the relations with Israel, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan. And all the efforts to achieve a global solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict will continue to be actively pursued.

The consolidation of the Euro-Mediterranean relation will be promoted by developing the large projects of the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as by implementing its institutional structures.

Efforts will also be made to continue promoting the Eastern Partnership to facilitate the progressive approach of these six countries to the European Union.

In addition, we shall promote the building of a strategic relation with Russia, based on an earnest and constructive approach of our common interdependency. Within this framework of growing cooperation, we shall further the implementation of the roadmaps for the four common areas of the Union with Russia.

5. The Union's enlargement - European support in the Western Balkans

The Spanish Presidency will firmly support the continuity of the EU enlargement process, according to the renewed consensus defined by the European Council in December 2006. Croatia's accession negotiations will be particularly intensified for a prompt conclusion, the negotiations with Turkey will continue at a suitable pace, and the possible initiation of negotiations with Iceland will also be addressed. The integration prospect of other countries from the Western Balkans will be considered as well.

6. Looking at Asia - Strengthening cooperation to address the global agenda

We propose to renew an increasingly closer relation between the EU and Japan and to pay special attention to the cooperation with China, India and ASEAN. We shall further our relation with Pakistan and we shall maintain the Union's firm commitment to Afghanistan's security, democratic strengthening and economic and social development.

IV. A EUROPE OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS, A EUROPE FOR ALL CITIZENS

The strengthening of the European Union largely depends upon the development of its citizens' rights and freedoms. Bringing the Union closer to the citizenship by promoting their involvement in the life of the Community is a strategic objective that requires the implementation of various initiatives.

1. A more democratic Europe with the participation of its citizens – the popular legislative initiative

Thanks to the European popular legislative initiative, included for the first time in the Treaty of Lisbon, Member State citizens may urge the Commission to formulate legislative proposals on matters they consider should be regulated at European level. The Spanish Presidency will work to make this instrument of direct democracy a reality as soon as possible.

2. The Charter of Fundamental Rights, a further guarantee for citizens

The Treaty of Lisbon incorporates the Charter of Fundamental Rights, establishing its legally binding nature. This instrument reasserts the rights, freedoms and principles acknowledged by the Union, making them more visible and their protection more efficient.

3. Accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Europe should be at the forefront in the defence and promotion of human rights. Following the Treaty of Lisbon's mandate, the Spanish Presidency will begin the European Union accession process to the Council of Europe's European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

This accession shows the Union's firm commitment to the respect for human rights and will provide an additional guarantee for its effective protection.

4. Reinforcing Europe's social dimension

Within a context of economic crisis that tests the social cohesion and the welfare achieved by European societies, the Union should be a guarantee of protection for our citizens. We should work to strengthen the European project's social dimension by consulting Member States, social interlocutors and the civil society. The Communication the Commission will submit on the new 2011-2015 European Social Agenda will complement the content of the EU 2020 Strategy, incorporating social protection, inclusion and integration as key elements.

5. Fighting against gender-based violence

The Union's capacity to eradicate gender-based violence should be improved. The creation of a European Observatory to draw up a common diagnosis of this terrible problem, as well as the adoption of a European Protection Order for the victims, will be two essential initiatives that will be advanced by the Spanish Presidency to achieve concrete progress on this matter.

6. The European Union as a common space for freedom, security and justice

The Stockholm Programme, which deepens the development of the European Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice for the 2010-2014 period, is a key vehicle for Europe to efficiently face transnational threats such as organised crime, drug trafficking, terrorism or human trafficking.

To enforce it, the Spanish Presidency will promote the adoption of the corresponding Action Plan whereby both the Union's political priorities on this matter and the application measures and control instruments for its execution will be implemented.

In addition, as Union members we should agree on the European Strategy for Home Security, promoting the creation of a European model that will gather the EU guiding principles and strategic lines on the matter.

7. Promoting European Immigration and Asylum Policy

The Spanish Presidency will encourage a common immigration and asylum policy, developing the agenda for the Global Approach on Immigration and for the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum. We shall work so that it will meet its objectives, namely, achieving an organised legal immigration, fighting against illegal immigration and human trafficking, and controlling the Union's foreign borders, furthering cooperation with countries of origin and transit. Within this context, special attention will be given to unaccompanied immigrant minors.

Following the inclusion of this matter in the Stockholm Program, the Union may start adopting the first decisions on the subject, which should address minors' prevention, protection and return to their families or foster institutions in their countries of origin.

The Spanish Presidency will also encourage immigrants' integration policies, based on Union values, education, intercultural dialogue and access and promotion of job diversity.

Operational Programme of Council Areas

1. GENERAL AFFAIRS

INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS / TREATY OF LISBON

The Treaty of Lisbon offers the Union a new institutional framework to reinforce the efficiency of its policies, step up external action's coherence and visibility and increase its democratic legitimacy, enhancing European citizens' rights and promoting their participation in the Union's decision-making process. The Spanish Presidency will make every effort to ensure an orderly and swift transition from the Treaty of Nice to the Treaty of Lisbon and will take every step to guarantee that the latter's provisions are fully implemented.

Therefore, and following the work started under the Sweden Presidency regarding the implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon, the Spanish Presidency will place special emphasis on the following actions:

Launching the European External Action Service

The creation of a European External Action Service is one of the chief institutional innovations set out in the Treaty of Lisbon.

Based on preliminary work put forward in the Sweden Presidency's report submitted to the European Council in October, it will be the task of the Spanish Presidency to collaborate with the High Representative to meet the objective set forth by the European Council of adopting the necessary legal regulations to establish the European External Action Service before late April 2010 and ensure its prompt implementation. Meeting this objective will also require a close cooperation with the Commission and the European Parliament, which Spain will most definitely promote.

The popular legislative initiative

The popular legislative initiative included in the Treaty of Lisbon, whereby at least one million Europeans from a significant number of States will be able to call upon the Commission to present a legislative proposal about matters they believe should be regulated at European level, is an essential instrument for citizens to voice their opinion on Union related matters.

The Spanish Presidency wishes that this direct democracy instrument becomes a reality for European citizens as soon as possible. Therefore, during its six-month term, it will promote the approval by the European Parliament and the Council of a regulation establishing the conditions and procedures required to channel this initiative. To that effect, it will call upon the Commission to promptly submit the relevant proposal.

Union's accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The Treaty of Lisbon grants the Union the mandate to access the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms concluded within the framework of the Council of Europe.

This accession, which complements the approval of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, will imply an additional guarantee of effective European citizens' fundamental rights protection, and shows the Union's firm commitment to the respect for human rights.

Based on the proposal submitted by the Commission, the Spanish Presidency will promptly start the accession process and foster the negotiations to find agreed formulae that respect Community specificities and sensitivities of all States.

Increasing the number of seats in the European Parliament

The full implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon implies the transitional adjustment of the European Parliament's composition. Such composition should reflect the equitable distribution of seats agreed upon during the negotiation of the Treaty to respond to the decreasing proportionality principle. Spain has made the first move to start the necessary procedures and will summon during its Presidency the necessary Intergovernmental Conference, with the aim of completing this change before the end of 2010.

The solidarity clause

The Treaty of Lisbon offers the legal foundation for Member States and the Union to act jointly in a spirit of solidarity, providing mutual assistance in case of terrorist attack or natural or human disaster, occurred within the borders of the European Union. This is an innovative instrument that will strengthen the protection of European citizens.

We shall support the submission of the necessary joint proposal before the High Representative and the Commission so that this clause can be efficiently enforced when so required.

Consular assistance for the protection of European citizens

The Presidency is aware of the need to introduce coordination mechanisms in the event of crisis outside Union's borders, work to facilitate an Agreement on minimum consular assistance baselines for Member State citizens outside the EU, and foster progress in consular assistance to European citizens within the EU.

The initiatives derived from the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon on which the Spanish Presidency will work include, inter alia, delegated acts and executive acts, and the Consultative Committee for the appointment of members of the EU Court of Justice and the Court.

EU 2020

The adoption of the new EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy is a key objective for the Spanish Presidency. The goal is to provide the Union with an effective instrument to champion and coordinate modernising policies that may facilitate the transition to a more sustainable economy from an economic, environmental and social perspective. However, the new Strategy should also work as a way to accelerate the recovery and the exit from the crisis by the European economies. In this regard, the contributions from the Reflection Group headed by Felipe González will be considered.

POLICIES AND BUDGET REVIEW

The European Commission should submit a report on the possible review of the European Union's expenditure policies and budgetary resources for the Council to provide guidance on the matter in 2010. The Spanish Presidency will address the work derived from said report upon its submittal by the Commission in the first half of 2010.

FUTURE OF THE COHESION POLICY

The debate about the future of the Cohesion Policy will be based upon the European Commission's Strategic Report, seeking to include territorial cohesion. The Spanish Presidency will also foster the development policy of the European insular regions. Institutional cooperation mechanisms will be examined to face the challenges posed by the Treaty of Lisbon.

OUTERMOST REGIONS

We shall ensure the implementation of the Commission's recommendations contained in its Communication entitled "The outermost regions: an asset for Europe". We also deem it necessary to develop and implement a renewed Community strategy that may favour these regions. Hence, the adoption of Commission proposals to execute said strategy within the framework of the coming Financial Perspectives will be promoted.

ENLARGEMENT STRATEGY

The Spanish Presidency will prioritise the intensification of accession negotiations with Croatia and its possible conclusion as soon as the necessary conditions emerge. In turn, to maintain a suitable pace of accession negotiations with Turkey, reforms in said country will be fostered and endorsed, ensuring the prompt opening of the various chapters as soon as the relevant technical requirements are met. Should accession negotiations with FYROM be started, the Spanish Presidency will pursue to ensure they advance in a sustainable and steady fashion.

Likewise, should the Council decide to start accession negotiations with Iceland, the Presidency will ensure their normal development pursuant to the mechanisms and procedures in place.

We shall continue working for the stabilisation and consolidation of the EU perspective on the Western Balkans, using all the instruments available to that end, particularly, the Stabilisation and Association Process. Within this framework, the continued process of integration of Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina will be supported. On occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Zagreb Summit, a ministerial meeting will be proposed to analyse the progress made in the Stabilisation and Association Process and to forward the European region perspective.

2. FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy will lead the Union's policy on this matter and will chair the Foreign Affairs Council. The Spanish Presidency will fully support the former in performing her functions, fostering the rapid implementation of the European External Action Service and actively contributing to a smooth and orderly transition to the Union's new model of external action.

COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

In the multilateral cooperation sphere, the United Nations reform will continue being supported. Improving the coherence of the UN system and having a sound and efficient institutional system with sufficient resources becomes, therefore, a priority. The EU will maintain its commitment to the balanced development of the three pillars of the Organisation: peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. Furthermore, work will be done to promote intercultural dialogue and among civilizations by promoting the Alliance of Civilizations initiative.

The protection and promotion of human rights and its full integration into the UN system are a priority for the EU. Two issues are thus especially relevant to us: the consolidation of the Human Rights Council and progress achieved in the abolition of the death penalty. Other priority issues will be the fight against women discrimination and gender-based violence, the fight against torture, the defence of the right to drinking water and sanitation, the fight against sexual discrimination and the protection of children's rights and disabled people's rights.

The "strategic partnership" with Latin America and the Caribbean will be promoted. The 6th EU-Latin America/Caribbean Summit, as well as the simultaneous sub-regional EU-Central America, EU-Mercosur, EU-Cariforum and EU-Chile Summits, will enable a qualitative leap in the bi-regional relation to jointly address the challenges posed by the global agenda (economic and financial crisis, climate change, fight against poverty and social exclusion).

We hope to conclude the negotiations for the EU Association Agreement with the Central America Integration System, as well as the Multipartite Trade Agreement with several Andean countries. Work will also be done to revitalise the negotiations for an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

An Action Plan establishing the fundamental bi-regional cooperation objectives will be approved at the EU-Latin America/Caribbean Summit, together with the implementation of a finance facility for Latin America and the Caribbean, the adoption of a Work Programme stating the political dialogue priorities, and the promotion of the EU-Latin America/Caribbean Foundation to start its activities by 2010.

Special attention will be given to the start-up and development of political dialogue mechanisms derived from granting Mexico and Brazil the condition of "EU strategic partners". The first EU-Mexican Summit, which will be held in Spain, will evidence the new strategic character Mexico has acquired for the EU.

A special effort will be made to strengthen the Transatlantic Dialogue.

A pragmatic approach has thus been adopted in preparing the EU-USA Summit, where the economic and financial crisis recovery strategy, climate change, energy security, cooperation in legal and domestic affairs, development policy and other common foreign policy matters such as the peace process in the Middle East, Iran or Afghanistan-Pakistan will be tackled. A joint Declaration on the fight against terrorism will be proposed to reinforce operational cooperation based on our shared commitment.

With regard to the EU-Canada relations, a bilateral Summit will be held to review the progress made in the negotiations of the new extended Economic-Trade Agreement.

We wish to take major steps during these six months to strengthen the relations between the EU and Russia. Progress will be pursued in energy cooperation, the negotiations of the new post PCA Agreement, mobility simplification and global matters. Furthermore, Russia's participation in Eastern Partnership programmes within the European Neighbourhood Policy framework will be encouraged.

The Spanish Presidency will work for a balanced development of both the Eastern and the Mediterranean tracks of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The expiring Neighbourhood Action Plans will be renewed, as well as the distribution of funds from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument for the 2011-2013 period.

On the Eastern track of the ENP, focus will be placed on the processes opened in the Eastern Partnership to reinforce the EU relations with the six Eastern neighbours both bilaterally and multilaterally. In this respect, the adequate preparation of the third round of thematic platforms will be a top priority. Ukraine will be especially considered.

On the Southern track of the ENP, special importance will be given to the Maghreb, with the first EU-Morocco Summit to be held in Madrid and the development of its "advanced statut", the promotion of negotiations for a Framework EU-Libya Agreement, and the upgrading of the Association Agreements with Israel, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan. Regarding Algeria, relations will be intensified in a number of priority areas, among which the development of an energy partnership should be highlighted. Relations with the other partners in the Southern Neighbourhood will also be fostered insofar as possible.

As to the Union for the Mediterranean, the second Heads of State and Government Summit will be held to address the main topics on the global agenda (economic crisis, climate change, energy, food security, etc.) from the Mediterranean standpoint. In addition, the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area Project should be revamped, and the status of the implementation of the six large UpM projects approved at the Paris Summit (Solar Plan, Supporting Business, Maritime and Land Highways, De-pollution of the Mediterranean, Civil Protection, and Higher Education and Research – Euro-Mediterranean University) should be assessed. A biennial work programme should also be adopted to give continuity to all four partnership dimensions. Finally, the Summit should consolidate the UpM institutional structure, ensuring the final implementation of its Secretariat.

With regard to the Middle East region, the EU will continue supporting, especially within the Middle East Quartet, the efforts to resume peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine with a view to achieving a global, fair and lasting solution to the conflict. In the case of Iran, the efforts to find a solution to the nuclear file will be backed at all fora, based on the "two-track" strategy. The negotiation for the free trade agreement between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council will be further supported, while the political dialogue and cooperation with all its members and Iraq will continue.

As to the ACP states, the Joint EU-ACP Council will be held. A satisfactory conclusion to the second review of the Cotonou Convention will be pursued, together with the examination of the X FED for the subsequent enforcement of the adopted measures.

With respect to Africa, the implementation of the Joint Africa-European Union Strategy will be promoted, as well as the EU dialogue and cooperation mechanisms with the African Union and the regional African bodies (CEDEAO, SADC, CEMAC-CEEAC, IGAD) will be reinforced.

Preventive diplomacy, institutional strengthening and crisis management will be fostered as effective vehicles to reinforce peace and security in Africa. A reflection process will be launched in the EU on the Gulf of Guinea's situation. Furthermore, contributions will be made to promote democracy and the Rule of Law fostering the presence of EU missions to oversee and observe election processes in the region, when possible.

By the same token, special heed will be paid to Western Africa and the Sahel ahead of the potential unsettling effects triggered by terrorist threats, drug trafficking and other illegal trafficking.

Attention will also be given to the development of the EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership, the Special EU-Cape Verde and the Horn of Africa Partnership and, particularly, the stabilisation process in Somalia. The evolution of the situation in the Great Lakes of Africa will be closely followed as well.

The Spanish Presidency will further the political dialogue of Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement, strengthen the civil society's role and promote the respect for human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment within the framework of the "Spain-Africa, Women for a Better World" process, which Fifth Meeting will be held in Valencia in March 2010.

EU relations with Asia will be consolidated both at bilateral and regional level (ASEM, ASEAN). The foundations of a growingly closer relation between the EU and Japan will be renewed. The 19th EU-Japan Summit, which will be held in Tokyo, will contribute to strengthen cooperation on key aspects of the global agenda and will foster ongoing work to update the institutional framework between the EU and Japan (EU-Japan Action Plan) expiring in 2011. The already existing high levels of cooperation with China, India and the ASEAN states will be further promoted and a ministerial meeting will be held with them in Madrid.

As to Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Spanish Presidency will support the implementation of the Plan for Strengthened EU Action in Afghanistan and Pakistan, in addition to reinforcing relations with Pakistan during the EU-Pakistan Summit.

The European Union's Strategy for Central Asia will be further developed.

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The European Security Strategy, updated by the European Council of December 2008 under the French Presidency, will continue guiding the EU foreign action. The EU's commitment to efficient multilateralism, focused on the UN and based on international legality, is a central element of this Strategy.

In terms of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the Spanish Presidency will work to make a qualitative leap in the Union's civil and military capabilities, promoting a more efficient and flexible use of Combat Groups, consolidating the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO and boosting the work performed by the European Defence Agency. Efforts will be maintained to improve civil-military coordination and the EU readiness to contribute to conflict prevention, stabilisation and resolution through crisis management operations will be ensured. Efforts will be made so that cooperation on this matter with the United Nations is reinforced, as well as with regional organisations such as the OSCE and the African Union. Work will also be done to increase cooperation on the PCSD sphere with UpM partners.

With regard to non-proliferation and disarmament, the EU's position in preparing and leading the work of the NPT Review Conference will be coordinated. As to conventional disarmament, special attention will be given to the progress of discussions with a view to a future International Treaty to regulate arms trade.

In the Fight against Terrorism, the agenda established by the EU Strategy against Terrorism, as well as by the EU Strategy against Radicalisation and Recruitment will be maintained, especially in respect of the use of Internet with terrorist and radicalisation purposes. The debate about protection and promotion of human rights will also be fostered, particularly in connection with victims.

COMMON TRADE POLICY

The role of the trade policy as an instrument to overcome the economic crisis will be consolidated under the Spanish Presidency, with the submittal of a new strategy on the matter at the initiative of the European Commission, and reinforcing foreign aspects of competitiveness in the EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy.

The multilateral dimension will continue being a major strand in trade negotiations. We shall not cease in our efforts to conclude the WTO Doha Round negotiations with a global, ambitious and balanced agreement that takes into account the G20 commitments. On the other hand, negotiations for the accession of new countries to the WTO such as Russia, Libya, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro will be fostered. This will make it possible to deepen bilateral trade relations through Free Trade Agreements on a stronger basis.

In its regional dimension, the Trade Policy Agenda also includes ambitious projects in terms of agreements. During the Spanish Presidency, negotiations for the EU-Mercosur Partnership are expected to be fostered, together with the conclusion of the Multipartite Agreement with Colombia and Peru and possibly with Ecuador; and the Agreement with Central America. Within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean, open negotiations to deepen economic and trade relations will be boosted. An effort will also be made to conclude the trade negotiations with the Gulf Cooperation Council. With Asia, the dialogue to reach free trade agreements with the ASEAN states will be reinforced.

In bilateral terms, the negotiation for a Strategic Partnership Agreement with India will be advanced, as well as the relation with China, while further regulatory cooperation with Japan will be promoted. Initiatives for a Free Trade Agreement with Russia could be launched if its accession to the WTO is finalised first. An attempt will also be made to conclude the negotiations for the Free Trade Agreement with Ukraine. Regarding transatlantic relations, the top priorities will be to strengthen the economic relation with the US by reinforcing the Transatlantic Economic Council, and make steadfast progress in the negotiations for the Economic and Trade Agreement with Canada.

The Markets Access Strategy will be bolstered and work will be geared to opening Public Tender markets, effective observance of intellectual and industrial property rights, and the conclusion of the Trade Agreement against Forgery.

Spain will play an especially active role in the negotiations of the OECD Export Credit Group and the OECD Consensus Group.

As to trade relations with ACP states, the conclusion of the regional Economic Partnership Agreements will continue to be actively fostered. EU initiatives and commitments within the framework of the joint strategy for Trade Aid will also be boosted.

COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN ASSISTANCE

For Spain, cooperation for development represents an essential and inescapable effort in the current crisis scenario. This conviction will be reasserted at all the fora where reform of the international economic and financial architecture may be discussed. In this regard, the Spanish Presidency will advocate the fulfilment of all international commitments concerning the fight against hunger and poverty, aid efficacy and development financing, in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the agreements reached at the Accra Conference on aid effectiveness and the Doha Conference on financing.

Tireless work should be put into the European contribution to the United Nations Conference on MDG. In this respect, the creation, dissemination and implementation of the Action Plan for gender equality in the EU development policies will be endorsed. Additionally, progress will be made in setting up a new European food security framework and the work conducted by the Global Health Commission to provide universal access to public health systems will be enhanced. In terms of aid effectiveness, transparent accountability and efficient division of labour among European donors will be promoted pursuant to the Code of Conduct on division of labour. We also intend to boost joint European work to restrain the negative impact of tax evasion in developing countries. The practical implementation of the European Consensus on Development will be fostered and progress will be made in relation to the objective of increasing the official aid for development to 0.56 per cent of the GDP by 2010, in alignment with the financing commitments for development.

The Spanish Presidency will strengthen and improve the coordination of humanitarian assistance, face the challenges of access by those affected by the crises and their protection, and preserve, in general, the humanitarian space. The Spanish Presidency will support the efforts to observe and abide by the International Humanitarian Law and will pay special attention to the quality of the assistance and support to the civil society actors involved in these policies. As to food security within a crisis context, work will continue for the adoption of a broad assistance approach under the umbrella of the Food Aid Convention's review process, as well as for the reduction of acute child malnutrition.

3. COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Consolidating the economic recovery and laying down the foundations for a more sustainable growth model are two of the main challenges to be faced by the EU in 2010.

The Spanish Presidency will continue working on the development of strategies to exit the crisis, both in the fiscal and financial spheres, applying the criteria adopted by the Council. Therefore, from the fiscal perspective, the withdrawal of the extraordinary measures will be coordinated within the framework of the Stability and Growth Pact, with deadlines tailored to the circumstances of each Member State. In the financial sphere, the extraordinary measures will be withdrawn in a coordinated manner when so advised by domestic conditions. The European Council will be notified in June 2010 about the progress made.

The economic and financial crisis has evidenced the weaknesses of the current growth model and the need to achieve a more sustainable growth that may respond to the challenges faced by the EU. The new EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy will play an essential role in this perspective. Its implementation is one of the top priorities for the Spanish Presidency's economic policy.

In addition to the structural reforms, the improvement of the financial sector's regulation and supervision is one of the backbones to overcome the crisis.

Special focus will be placed on the measures aimed at the reform of the European financial market, including the endorsement of the Commission's Financial Services priorities during the 2010-2015 period with a longer term financial markets integration outlook.

Hence, the Spanish Presidency will work jointly with the European Parliament to put in place, as soon as possible in 2010, the new financial supervisory framework, endorsed by the Council in December 2009.

We shall also put our efforts into negotiating the Capital Requirement Directive and shall foster the agreement within the Council to negotiate the Alternative Investment Funds Managers Directive. Priority will also be given to the progress made regarding crisis management measures in financial institutions. Current work related to the Deposits Guarantee Fund will be particularly addressed.

In on financial on sphere the Spanish Presidency wishes to foster, *inter alia*, the following priorities: the reform of the market abuse directive to improve the relevant information communication scheme, the upgrading of regulations applicable to prospectus required for public offers and for admission to trading on regulated markets, the improvement of investors' compensation scheme, the regulation of the so-called pre-packaged investment products (financial products marketed outside the scope of sectorial directives), and the regulation of OCT derivatives markets. A revision of the Financial Conglomerates Directive is also foreseen as well as progress in the internal market of retail financial services.

In addition, we will closely follow-up the implementation of the Internal Market Strategy Review, the Regulation Improvement and the Services Directive. The Macroeconomic Dialogue and the reinforcement of the national budgetary frameworks are issues of renewed value in the current crisis scenario that will also be given appropriate consideration.

Periodic assessment of the convergence processes of non-single currency Member States, with no derogation, and the progress achieved in fulfilling the necessary conditions for the adoption of the euro will continue.

Most of the negotiation of the EIB external Mandates will be carried out. The Spanish Presidency will prioritise the LAA (Latin America and Asia) Mandate and the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP).

In terms of Budgetary Policy, the Spanish Presidency will start the triennial revision of the Financial Regulation enabling, to incorporate the new budgetary provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon as well as the negotiation of the Multiannual Financial

Framework Regulation included therein, once the Commission submits its proposal.

With regard to direct taxation, priority will be given to improving tax information exchange mechanism and co-operation among tax administrations; i.e., the Taxation of Savings Directive, the Administrative Cooperation Directive and the Direct Tax Directive on Mutual Assistance. In terms of indirect taxation, priorities are focused on the fight against intra-Community fraud, reduction of administrative burdens, the new proposal for the Directive on rules of electronic invoicing and the proposals for Directives aimed at energy efficiency, such as the review of the Directive on energy taxation. Similarly, administrative cooperation on excise duties will be promoted through the implementation of the Excise Movement Control System (EMCS). Finally, the study of the possibility to decentralise indirect taxation will be proposed.

Official economic statistics will continue to be developed. The application of the Code of Good Practices and the improvement in the quality, reliability, transparency and efficiency of statistical processes and products will also be facilitated.

4. JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

OVERVIEW AND COMMON ACTION AREAS

With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, the Spanish Presidency will have to initiate the process to modify and supersede the actions related to criminal police and legal cooperation that might be changed pursuant to the new Treaties, as well as to implement institutional initiatives, particularly the Internal Security Committee (COSI).

The Spanish Presidency will start implementing the multiannual programme (2010-2014) for the development of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ), Stockholm Programme, and will guide the adoption of its Action Plan, which will realise the political priorities, the actions to be developed both by the EU and by the Member States, and the instruments to control and assess its execution, as well as the schedule for its implementation. Within this framework, our Presidency will foster the definition of a sustainable European Internal Security Strategy providing coherence and efficiency to the different mechanisms and stakeholders in this sphere and which may be approachable for citizens.

The Union's external dimension in terms of justice and home affairs should be reinforced boosting international cooperation in immigration, the fight against terrorism, organised crime and human trafficking, judicial cooperation and safeguarding of fundamental rights. A special attempt will be made at reinforcing transatlantic cooperation with the US in the AFSJ. In addition, a special effort will be made to deepen the dialogue with the countries of Northern Africa, Latin

America and the Caribbean and Russia, fostering cooperation in the fight against terrorism, organised crime and, especially, against drug trafficking.

The Spanish Presidency will also boost the strategy for Customs Cooperation in the AFSJ, as well as the Plan for its development.

HOME AFFAIRS

The Presidency will promote direct and operational police cooperation establishing a dynamic framework to perform joint operations through the creation of “joint cooperation teams”. It will also promote the implementation of a mobility program, following the Erasmus model, among middle and higher police training centre students from Member States.

Work will be done to facilitate the exchange of technical-ballistic information amongst police services of Member States and a cross-border warning system will be developed in connection with child abduction and missing people at special risk.

We shall ensure Europol successfully overcomes the transition stage leading to the implementation of the European Police Bureau as European Agency during the first six months of 2010, strengthening its operational backup role to Member States services responsible for law enforcement.

As regards the fight against terrorism, the relations between Member States’ counter-terrorism coordination centres will be intensified and the EU strategies and action plans on this matter will be adequately implemented and updated, particularly in relation to explosives safety, the use of Internet with terrorist purposes and the radicalisation phenomenon. As to the fight against organised crime, special attention will be given to cybercrime, money laundering and asset recovery.

The Spanish Presidency will endorse the strengthening of cooperation in crime prevention. In addition, special emphasis will be placed on victims of gender-based violence.

With respect to civil protection, the Spanish Presidency will work to improve the EU responsiveness to natural and human crises and disasters, particularly in terms of forest fire prevention and extinction. For this purpose, improved human and material resources and a joint response in case of NRBC risk will be promoted. The European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection will be developed and special attention will be given to the strengthening of the Mutual European Assistance and the implementation of Civil Protection Modules.

IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM

The Spanish Presidency will reinforce the European policy on this matter laying down the premises for the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum (EPIA) and the Global Approach to Migration, as well as the Stockholm Programme. The first EPIA annual assessment will take place during the JHA Council in June 2010, which will approve any possible recommendations to improve its application and will subsequently notify the European Council thereof.

Work will be done to strengthen immigrants' integration policies, through the 4th Conference of Ministers centred on equal opportunities. In terms of legal immigration, a common policy on setting up criteria for admission, residence and occupation of non-Community immigrant workers will be advanced. In this arena, the Spanish Presidency aims at launching a debate on linking employment policies and migration policies, fostering Member States management coordination of the inflow of immigrant workers needed by their labour market, respecting the principle of Community preference.

Special heed will be taken to the issue of "unaccompanied immigrant minors" to start making the first decisions on this matter, based on the contents of the Stockholm Programme.

As regards integrated borders management and fight against illegal immigration and human trafficking, an operational exercise will be proposed through the rapid border intervention teams. The active collaboration among Member States and the maximisation of instruments the EU makes available through the relevant agencies and bodies will be promoted to foster solidarity and accountability principles. The Frontex role will, therefore, be reinforced and work will be done to achieve better coordination with national surveillance systems. The necessary efforts will also be made to enhance the visibility of the integrated nature of the common external border management and of the people involved. Progress in the implementation of new border management technologies will also be sought.

Within the framework of the fight against informal employment, the enforcement of the future Sanctions Directive should be ensured.

In terms of asylum, work will continue toward the consolidation of the Common European Asylum System to establish an asylum procedure and a uniform statute for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. Special attention will be given to the implementation of the European Asylum Support Office. The external dimension of the asylum issue will also be considered so that people are better protected outside the Union.

Work will be done to improve the technical and financial implementation of the Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows Programme in relation to the European Funds for external borders, for refugees, for the return to their countries and for integration. The visa policy will be promoted to be based on the country of

origin rather than on a policy of individualised risks. Progress in harmonising procedures in this field and in the accountability of Member States issuing Schengen visas will also be fostered. As to the agreements to grant visas, new negotiation processes should be opened in addition to assessing already existing ones.

Cooperation with third countries regarding migratory affairs will be fostered in different spheres, such as the Rabat Process, the EU-Latin America Dialogue, the Transatlantic Agenda with the United States and the Global Approach. Reinforcing assistance, cooperation and readmission agreements with countries of origin and transit is vital to deepen the common migratory policy.

JUSTICE

Horizontal questions

The promotion of fundamental rights and freedoms in Europe and in foreign relations is a Union's sign of identity and should continue being so. The Presidency will foster the process of accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Likewise, coordination mechanisms between Union institutions and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights will be improved and reinforced protection and assistance to women, children and victims of crime, especially gender-based violence, will be prioritised.

As regards data protection, an agreement on the proposal to create a European Passengers Data Record system to protect security will be fostered. In terms of information and communication technologies, the Spanish Presidency will promote the observance of the e-Justice Action Plan provisions and work will be done to achieve record interconnection.

The Area of Freedom, Security and Justice calls for boosting a European legal culture; joint and exchange programmes for magistrates, prosecutors and clerks will thus be promoted.

The assessment mechanisms of already adopted legal instruments enforcement will be improved, giving special attention to the enforcement of the European Arrest Warrant.

Criminal justice

The Spanish Presidency will work to advance the principle of mutual recognition, through initiatives such as the European Evidence Warrant and the reinforcement of the operational efficacy of joint investigation teams.

The fight against human trafficking will be prioritised and the adoption of a new instrument to fight cybercrime will be promoted to update the existing framework. In terms of procedural rule, the Spanish Presidency will continue the process initiated to agree minimum common rules for criminal procedural rights and guarantees.

Spain wishes to contribute to reinforce the legal framework for child protection. The protection against child sexual abuse and the fight against child pornography will be increased, completing the current legal framework against paedophilia.

The Presidency will foster the improvement of existing measures to protect victims, particularly gender-based violence victims, promoting the creation of the European Protection Warrant, a specific instrument that may guarantee the protection of people under threat or victims throughout the Union.

Protection instruments in the fight against intellectual and industrial property piracy should also be improved.

Civil and commercial justice

The Spanish Presidency will encourage the debate ahead of the Brussels I Regulation on jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement of judgments on civil and commercial matters. For this purpose, a seminar will be organised with the participation of the various sectors forming the world of Law professionals.

Work leading to the adoption of an instrument for successions encompassing the applicable law and the recognition and enforcement of judgements and inheritance deeds will be fostered, as well as the analysis of possible reforms in matrimonial law, applicable law to the marital property system and separation and divorce (Rome III).

The Spanish Presidency will also promote the evaluation of the European contract law common reference framework.

5. EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY, HEALTH AND CONSUMERS

The Spanish Presidency will work to restrict the effect of the crisis on labour markets and its negative social effects, giving special attention to the most vulnerable and the new risks of exclusion.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment will be kept as a priority for the new EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy. The main objectives on the subject are the following:

Maintenance and creation of quality jobs by improving labour efficiency to increase business productivity and competitiveness through better workers' training and qualification. It is, therefore, necessary to promote new sources of employment and, particularly, the so-called *green-collar jobs*, linked to the fight against climate change, such as in the field of renewable energies, recycling and environmental preservation services; the *white-collar jobs*, tied to the new social assistance demands; and *the blue-collar jobs*, related to new technologies, chiefly information and communication technologies. Active employment and social inclusion policies should also be reinforced and new initiatives should be taken to favour business dynamism.

Structural changes should be introduced into the labour market to improve its operation. Job stability and continued requalification should be facilitated; job security should be increased by making the transition from unemployment to training and from training to employment easier, as well as the mobility between jobs; investment in human capital should be increased by improving training and adjusting education and training systems to the new market demands; mobility among EU States and among regions should be favoured; and a special effort should be made for the groups facing more labour integration problems to increase their participation in the labour market. Initiatives or proposals will be drawn up regarding the Directive on the posting of workers and the guarantee of workers' rights within the framework of the freedom to provide services.

Specific programmes fostering youth employment should be established for a better integration and longer continuance in the labour market, through measures that may fight educational failure and early dropout and to increase the number of young people completing secondary education or professional training. It is also essential to improve the transition between education and employment by boosting youth labour integration through training contracts that may strengthen their professional skills and enable a subsequent access to quality jobs. Training, advice and technical support instruments should be established to favour youths who wish to become entrepreneurs, particularly in new jobs linked to the new growth model, and offer incentives to companies to hire young workers, with a special emphasis on newcomers into the labour market. Finally, undeclared employment, illegal employment and the grey economy should be combated.

In addition, we should pursue labour equality between men and women definitely, eliminating any form of discrimination.

SOCIAL POLICY

The Spanish Presidency will collaborate with the Commission to analyse the implementation of the Revised Social Agenda established for 2008-2010, closing the current period. Ahead of this new period, the Spanish Presidency will closely work with the Commission in designing the new European Social Agenda, within a broad framework of consultation and cooperation with Member States, social

interlocutors and the civil society in general. The gender equality perspective should become a key element in the new social cohesion model.

The Spanish Presidency's top priority concerning social protection and inclusion will be the consolidation of European social protection systems, from a perspective that fosters the active integration of those facing more difficulty when entering the labour market. In this regard, emphasis will be placed on the development of the activities foreseen for the celebration of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The disability perspective will be addressed from all dimensions as a focal point and particular attention will be paid to the various aspects of personal autonomy.

Given the social and demographic changes, which have carried major implications for social protection systems across Europe, joint work to set forth common objectives, established within the framework of the open coordination method, will be promoted. The production of a White Paper on Ageing in Europe and a European Active Ageing Programme will thus be encouraged.

The Spanish Presidency will submit to the Commission and the Member States the conclusions drawn at the European Forum of Social Tourism held in Spain, gathering the support to the Commission's decision of declaring 2012 as the European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity.

In order to make headway in ensuring access to social services of general interest and satisfactory quality, work will continue to find new instruments, whether through legal reforms or by deepening the open coordination method.

The Second European Summit on Gypsy Population will be held during this Presidency, with a link to the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

HEALTH

The Presidency will expand the 2006 Council Declaration on EU health systems' common values and principles, considering the priorities of the second 2008-2013 Community action programme on health and the Union's future health strategy.

During the Spanish Presidency, we shall try to foster the approval of the Directive on organ donation and transplant, the development of advanced therapies, as well as integrated care and assistance for chronic and non-transmissible diseases.

In terms of public health innovation, the Spanish Presidency will promote electronic health, or *e-health*, and will foster patients' quality and security improvement initiatives and the work conducted by the High Level Public Health Group.

With regard to medicines, safety and quality will be reinforced, improving pharmacovigilance systems and influencing on other aspects such as antimicrobial resistance, the rational use of antibiotics and the fight against drug forgery.

Special attention will be given to the regulatory progress made on food security, in issues such as consumer information on food products, new foodstuffs, food and animal origin food hygiene. Progress should also be made in obesity prevention plans.

CONSUMERS

As to consumers' protection, work will continue on the regulation of their rights and progress will be attempted in relation to products' general safety.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

As to gender equality and non-discrimination, the Spanish Presidency will make every effort to move toward labour equality between men and women, especially addressing measures on wage differences due to sex, part-time work, equal opportunities in the business world and balance between professional and family and personal life. Work will be done to mainstream a gender equality perspective throughout the EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy.

The Commission's assessment of the roadmap for gender equality concluding in 2010 will be followed up, and the creation of a new roadmap for 2011-2015 will be fostered.

Special attention will be given to violence against women. The creation of a European Observatory on Gender-based Violence will be proposed which, in collaboration with the European Gender Institute, will design common indicators on this matter.

The Spanish Presidency will continue assessing the progress and overseeing the fulfilment of the Beijing Action Platform. Issues related to gender-based violence and the wage gap will be analysed. The follow-up report on said programme will be submitted before the United Nations Women's Commission within the framework of its fifteenth anniversary (Beijing+15). The "Beijing+15" European Forum will be held to analyse the progress made and study future possibilities ahead of 2010.

During the next six months, the European Union should reach an agreement about the last directive proposal on the fight against discrimination based on religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in non-working environments.

6. COMPETITIVENESS (DOMESTIC MARKET, INDUSTRY AND RESEARCH)

The Spanish Presidency considers innovation is a key factor to improve competitiveness. Therefore, within the framework of the new EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy, and based upon a broad concept of innovation, the Presidency intends to contribute to develop the European Innovation Plan, as an ambitious and central initiative.

DOMESTIC MARKET

The Spanish Presidency wishes to continue improving the regulation and design legislative proposals assessing their impact. Likewise, reducing companies' administrative burdens by 25% in 2012 is deemed a priority. Legislative initiatives on Company Law and Competition Law will also be tackled.

After the entry into force of the amendments to the Community Customs Code, work will be done to strengthen the European Union's supply chain security in the Customs Union sphere.

Safeguarding and protecting intellectual and industrial rights will be reinforced at Community level through manifold initiatives in the fight against piracy and forgery. With regard to industrial property, work will continue on the Community brand name file. As to the Community patent and the litigation system for the European patent, a constructive search for efficient and non-discriminatory solutions will be pursued, renewing efforts to improve companies' management of these rights, particularly by SMEs.

The Spanish Presidency will specifically address the entry into force of the Services Directive, which transposition term expires in late 2009 to open the mutual assessment process of its implementation. The full enforcement of said Directive will render positive outcomes on the European Union's economic growth.

INDUSTRY

The Spanish Presidency will study new possibilities to improve small and medium sized enterprises' operating conditions through initiatives in very different areas. The Small Business Act's Action Plan will still be enforced, putting special emphasis on the smallest companies' interests and needs applying the "Think small first" principle.

Efforts will be geared at continuing developing initiatives related to European industries' competitiveness –including their external track– in a globalised scenario. The Spanish Presidency will promote a political agreement to reform the European Standardisation System.

A debate at European level on the automotive sector will also be encouraged, especially about the electrical vehicle, which is as priority on the Spanish

Presidency's agenda during these six months. Therefore, possible public policies fostering its production and use in Europe will be studied.

In order to guarantee the European shipbuilding sector's future competitiveness, the debate about the new 2015 LeaderSHIP stage will be promoted, an extension for the sector's current State Aid Framework will be pursued, and work to agree on normal competition conditions in the international shipbuilding market will continue.

The Spanish Presidency will foster the creation of a tourist policy integrating framework, providing it with suitable financial resources and addressing the inclusion of the tourist viewpoint in the EU policies affecting the sector. A socially responsible European Tourist Model will be promoted, boosting European social tourism, the role of tourism in people's quality of life, tourist innovation and the environmental sustainability of tourism and its related activities.

RESEARCH

The Spanish Presidency will work to move ahead in the development of the European Research Area (ERA), proposing short and medium-term policies to further coordination amongst the various bodies involved. The initiative will address partnership and mobility of researchers, European research infrastructures (developing and implementing the European roadmap), joint programming in research areas of special interest and improved ERA governance and follow-up. Progress will also be made on aspects related to research centres excellence and universities modernisation.

In addition, Community instruments supporting R&D&I are to be consolidated, for which the European Research Council will be assessed and adjusted while participation in the Framework Programme will be further simplified. Attention will be given to public-private research initiatives focused on areas such as clean energies and climate change, the future of the Internet or sea and maritime research.

The launching of the first Innovation and Knowledge Communities will be particularly relevant for innovation. These communities have been selected by the European Technology and Innovation Institute within the framework of the European Innovation Plan, which will be developed during the next six months. Negotiations with non-EU ITER financing partners will also be addressed.

Finally, the role of R&D&I in social cohesion and the fight against poverty and social exclusion will be promoted together with a culture of science.

7. TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY

TRANSPORT

Transport will play a major role in the economic recovery and the definition of the new sustainable economic growth model. The principles of sustainability, innovation and security should, therefore, be fostered as driving forces of the transport policy; furthermore, work will be done to adjust them both to the new 2010-2020 White Paper on Transport and the new methodology the Commission will propose to review the direction of the Trans-European Transport Networks. The external scope of this policy will also be reinforced, and collaboration with southern Mediterranean countries will be promoted.

In connection with transport sustainability, and as part of the strategy to fight against climate change, the most sustainable means of transport, such as the railway, will be promoted and extended through appropriate infrastructure and services and improved intermodality and logistics. In turn, sea transport will be fostered by reviewing criteria applicable to the deployment of maritime highways and facilitating the development of short-distance sea transport. Transit in urban and metropolitan areas will be promoted. The European Economic Recovery Plan's "green vehicles" initiative will be considered, and special attention will be given to the liberalisation and operation of rail freight.

The deployment and use of intelligent transport systems will be particularly addressed. The EGNOS system and the Galileo Programme will be promoted, dealing with the management structure change, the programme's medium term review and the Regulated Public Service.

Air security will be prioritised, for which the development and upgrading of the applicable regulations should be encouraged and, particularly, the current rules about air accident investigation.

Progress will also be made in modifying the European Maritime Safety Agency.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The Spanish Presidency will promote the debate about the approval of a European Charter of Rights of Telecommunication Service Users, which should include broadband access as part of the Universal Service. Citizens' rights will also be enhanced through the 2010-2015 European Action Plan for Electronic Administration, advancing on the right to communication via electronic media and electronic identification of citizens.

Efforts will be put into the approval of the New 2010-2015 Strategy to promote the Information Society (i2010 follow-up). The Presidency will encourage a joint debate with Member States to improve Information Society indicators, as well as the deployment of cutting-edge networks, increased networks security and protection of intellectual and industrial property on the Internet.

The Internet of the Future will be boosted: new products, applications, processes and services, all of them resulting from the aforementioned reforms and current and future sector trends.

ENERGY

The Spanish Presidency will promote the adoption of the 2010-2014 Energy Action Plan by the Spring European Council, a review of the Union's energy strategy for the next five years, which will incorporate the commitments set out in the Energy and Climate Package, as well as in the agreement reached at the Copenhagen Summit.

The development of an energy security policy constitutes a priority for the EU. Hence, work will continue on the Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan to limit Member States' vulnerability through measures such as the strengthening of Trans-European energy transport networks and energy interconnections within the Union, top market transparency and warning and solidarity mechanisms in case of crisis. A key element in this respect will be the new EU security and energy infrastructure instrument, which the Commission will introduce following the Green Paper's public consultation. Energy relations abroad will also be fostered through regular dialogue with the main energy consumer, producer and transit third countries. Work will also be geared to the Union's voicing a single position in this respect, adding the issue of renewable energies to the debate.

Following the adoption of the Directive on renewable energies, the Spanish Presidency will support the Member States' drafting of their national plans, which should be submitted before June 2010. Special attention will also be given to the objective of improving energy efficiency, as stated in the 2006 European Action Plan for Energy Efficiency. This Plan will be reviewed over the coming six months to adjust it to the Energy and Climate Package 20-20-20 commitment.

The Spanish Presidency will promote a third package of measures about the internal energy market. It will foster the implementation of priority energy interconnection projects already agreed within the framework of the Trans-European Energy Network (TEN-E) Orientations and will support the creation of the Cooperation Agency for Energy Regulators.

The development of the European Strategic Energy Technologies Plan (SET Plan) will be supervised, together with the promotion of industrial initiatives on solar energy, intelligent networks and CO2 storage and capture.

8. AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY

AGRICULTURE

The Spanish Presidency considers continuing with the debates on the future of the CAP beyond 2013 a priority. The CAP objectives and its added value of promoting agri-food security and quality are still fully valid, as well as the sustainability, innovation and fight against climate change, the preservation of biodiversity and water management efficiency. The CAP adjustment to a changing reality and to an increasingly competitive and efficient sector implies a continuous process of reforms, for which sufficient resources should be guaranteed in order to address the objectives of this common policy. The negotiations conducted in the WTO will also be followed, paying special attention to agriculture. The evolution of the dairy market will also be addressed ahead of the elimination of the quota system.

We consider the improvement of European agriculture and agri-foodstuff competitiveness a priority, as well as the development of Community agri-food added value and the promotion of the European production model. Equal conditions between European and third country producers should, therefore, be guaranteed pursuant to animal health, plant health, public health and animal wellbeing requirements. Attention will also be paid to animal wellbeing or the electronic cattle identification.

Promoting a live, dynamic and sustainable rural environment is essential for our present and our future. In line with the promotion of effective equality between men and women in all dimensions, the role performed by women in agriculture and the rural environment will be fostered.

FISHERY

The Spanish Presidency will especially focus on the Review of the Common Fisheries Policy, which will conclude in 2012. Fishery management ensuring economic, social and environmental viability will be promoted. The Spanish Presidency will make sure the exploitation of fishery resources is based on sustainability criteria and the respect for socio-economic and ecosystem objectives. It will thus promote the acknowledgement of these principles at Community and international level. Actions on this matter should be supplemented with the promotion of responsible fish trade.

9. THE ENVIRONMENT

The environment in general and, in particular, biodiversity and forest preservation, the fight against desertification, the sustainable use of water, coast and sea sustainability or air quality improvement, as well as waste management, will be followed up and included as initiatives in different decision-making spheres and fora to ensure the EU continues being a global leader in promoting these policies.

The Spanish Presidency will also work for the EU to lead the period of preparation and Special Session of the UNEP's Administrative Board (Bali, February 2010) where aspects related to international environmental governance, the IPBS initiative and the green economy, among others, will be addressed.

The Union will also make the most of this new period following the Copenhagen Summit to reaffirm its commitment to the fight against climate change. The Spanish Presidency will endorse every opportunity ahead in this transition stage toward a low-carbon economy to generate new jobs and facilitate economic growth.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Spanish Presidency will specially work to reinforce the climate change/energy ratio, a cross-cutting issue upon which the transformation of the current economic and energy model into a medium and long-term sustainable growth model should be supported. The effective implementation of the energy and climate change package will be promoted, and the corresponding legislative changes thereof will be articulated, derived from the agreement reached at the Copenhagen Conference. Following this, the strictest implementation of the adopted agreements will be the core objective of the Spanish Presidency.

Particular attention will also be given to regional cooperation on climate change and energy matters to reinforce the Union's role as a global actor. The issued concerned with financial flows and environmental innovation and technologies will be especially addressed, in particular those geared at mitigation and adaptation to climate change and, most importantly, those focused on energy efficiency and renewable energies. Another priority will be the integration of adaptation to climate change as a focal point in sector policies, among which those related to water, land and biodiversity should be highlighted.

BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Spanish Presidency will grant top priority to establishing the "Community objective" on preservation and sustainable use for the period following 2010. This objective should also contribute to the global discussions to establish a future outlook on biodiversity. Special emphasis will also be placed on concluding the negotiations for the International Regime on Access to Genetic Resources and benefit sharing, and the CITES Convention COP 15, as well as the progress achieved in the United Nations IPBES process.

In early 2010, the Commission will present the Green Paper on Forest Protection, a priority issue for Spain. Work will be done to respond to the phenomena undermining said areas, namely the prevention of damages resulting therefrom such as forest fire.

The deadline for the transposition of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive will expire during the coming six-month period. An initial assessment and determination of the suitable environmental condition of marine waters should, therefore, start. Marine assessment and research will be the subject matter of a conference (EUROMARES 2010) as part of the celebration of the European Maritime Day.

Water will also be a priority issue, both in terms of the need to improve its management and the link between climate change and water shortage and draught. Establishing a joint water resources management strategy is deemed a priority, which should have a reference Community legislative instrument to manage draught and/or water shortage situations. Collaboration in water issues with Latin American and Mediterranean countries through the EU-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference will also be of paramount importance.

A new Action Programme on the environment replacing the current one by 2013 will also be drawn up. In addition, work will be performed on WEEE, RoHS, bio-waste, land protection, biocides, chemicals, REACH, mercury, CO2 in light commercial vehicles, IPPC, ship scrapping and environmental responsibility.

10. EDUCATION, YOUTH AND CULTURE

EDUCATION

The EU should foster education and training as driving forces for European development and social wellbeing. Both should be a key component of the EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy.

As to the social dimension and equity of educational systems, equal access to education is a must to efficiently combat early school dropout throughout all levels of the education and training system.

Professional training is a cornerstone for the economic development of society and progress in all aspects, thus making it a priority. The Spanish Presidency will work to reinforce the acquisition of competences linked to the “New skills for new jobs” initiative.

Stepping up the creation of the European Higher Education Area and the design of its development in the next decade will be especially tracked during these six months through the promotion of social policies in university education, the commitment with public university, university students mobility, commitment to quality and transparency and permanent learning models, among others. In addition, the EU will collaborate with non-European countries that have shown interest in the Bologna process.

The Presidency will promote the agenda for the modernisation of universities, called to be the catalyst for the construction of a European Knowledge Area, where European Higher Education and Research areas converge. A Conference about the European Knowledge Area will be held, with a special focus on third level education: a bridge between higher education and scientific research. Work will also be done to boost European university cooperation beyond Union borders, particularly in Latin America and the Mediterranean.

YOUTH

The main challenge in terms of youth policy is to offer a renewed boost to the European Youth Pact. A social inclusion strategy will be especially addressed, building bridges between education and the labour market, fostering increased youth autonomy, mobility, and involvement in shaping the European citizenship.

An effort will also be made to set up the new youth policies cooperation framework, including the Open Method of Coordination and Structured Dialogue as basic instruments, with a special emphasis on the youth with fewer opportunities.

CULTURE

In the cultural arena, progress will be made to achieve the objectives established in the European Cultural Agenda and the process to reinforce the role of cultural and creative industries in the EU 2020 Growth and Employment Strategy, as well as the development of the European cultural identity.

The Spanish Presidency will be focused on the Working Plan for culture, agreed by the Council for 2008-2010. Within this framework, the effects derived from the application of Structural Funds to culture and its promotion as a regional and local development factor through certain initiatives already in place –such as the European capital of culture– and other future initiatives –such as the European heritage label– will be especially relevant.

The potential of cultural and creative industries will have its own space in the future Green Paper and is being the subject matter of studies being conducted by the Commission and the Council. The Spanish Presidency will also work on online cultural contents and the promotion of European films.

SPORTS

With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon sports will be, for the first time, among the Community policies addressed by the Treaties. Over the coming six months, the regulatory development of the White Paper on Sport within the new legal framework will take place, with the creation of the “Sport Framework Programme”.

Sports are an essential tool to invigorate public health and, within this context, the Presidency wishes to reinforce and foster the coordination with governmental and non-governmental sports and health institutions to develop new guidelines for practicing physical activity.

We shall continue working increasingly harder on the anti-doping fight and shall favour all those programmes focused on sports potential as an instrument for social inclusion, integration and equal gender opportunities, and also as a tool to promote intercultural dialogue, development and peace.