

**STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT,
FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY ETA OF THE
BREAKING OF THE CEASEFIRE**

La Moncloa Palace

5 June 2007

Eta has put an end to the permanent ceasefire declared by Eta itself in March 2006.

This period had in fact already been broken by the attack on the Barajas airport terminal last December, which cost the lives of two Ecuadorian citizens.

Today, Eta has made the same decision as other times in the past. And now, like then, Eta is once again mistaken.

The response to this new mistake will be that which has always been given by the governments of Spain, the democratic forces and society as a whole. A response that is anchored in the joint defence of democratic values and institutions, in the rigorous implementation of the Rule of Law, in the effectiveness of the State security forces, and in international cooperation.

We are a strong country. Spanish society has shown, over a long time, that pain does not weaken its strength, that suffering does not diminish its determination. It will once again show this now, without giving in to any of the threats or challenges to which some would subject it.

Eta's decision is radically opposed to the path sought by the Basques and by Spanish society as a whole, the path towards peace. A path which has only one end, that of Eta giving up its

weapons. A path which can only be taken and travelled with a complete renunciation of violence.

I wish to address, in particular, the Basque people. I have done all that is within my power to achieve peace and to create a framework of universal coexistence, in which all options can be defended democratically and in which all types of confrontation may be overcome.

I know that most Basque citizens are well aware of the genuine effort made by the Government. And I wish to reaffirm that my greatest hope lies in the deep-felt wish of the majority of the Basque society and that of Spain as a whole to live in peace and freedom.

The future of the Basques depends and will continue to depend on them themselves, within the rule of law and in a democratic context. It will never be determined by terrorist violence.

Today I wish to make it plain that the Government, with the Rule of Law, and with all its strength, is applying and will apply all the means at its disposal in the defence of peaceful coexistence, and of the freedom and security of all.

I am grateful for the commitment of the political groups that have given their unconditional support to the Government during this period. And my very sincere gratitude is due, too, to all those individuals who have assured me of their support and trust.

I am hopeful that the political groups will give us their unanimous support in response to the announcement by Eta. I shall do my best to achieve it, because that is what the majority of the Spanish want and that is what the majority of our people need.

The strength of democracy and of dialogue will always defeat the deliriums of those who adopt totalitarian means. I am convinced that one day this belief will prevail, even among those who today, and once again, are threatening us all.

The continuation of violence will only bring about pain and suffering. And this pain and suffering will last until the law, democracy and freedom finally put an end to violence. But I am certain that sooner rather than later, Spanish society will definitively be at peace. And I shall do my utmost to ensure that this peace is accomplished as soon as possible.