



PSOE

Madrid, April 3rd 2020

Dear Comrades, dear Friends,

First of all, we would like to thank all of you for the expressions of support and encouragement you have been given to the Spanish Government and to PSOE in this health crisis that is battering Europe and the world.

As you know, Spain is currently one of the most affected countries in Europe by this unprecedented covid-19 pandemic that has surprised us all. Despite the large number of cases and the tragic death of 10,003 people—and 26,743 patients discharged from the hospitals—, we cautiously can announce that the curves seem to be faltering and we might be starting to control them as the measures taken by the Government begin to yield results. We would currently have entered into the plateau phase, a situation in which we will remain for some days before the curves start to go down.

The State of Alarm was declared on 14th March, and on 25th March the Spanish Parliament passed legislation to prolong it till next April the 12th. This State of Alarm gave the National Government the constitutional power to oversee the Health services and law enforcement units of all the Spanish Regions and Cities in a greatly decentralized country as Spain. It was a radical measure, difficult to take for any democracy. It included a general lockdown restricting movements, as citizens were asked to remain in their homes and were only allowed to very few and essential activities as the purchase of foodstuffs and pharmaceuticals; to assist the most vulnerable people; to attend health centers. Additionally, since 30th March, non-essential work activities have been suspended.

These strong and radical measure have a great economic impact for the Spanish society, especially in terms of unemployment, that our Government is determined to cushion with the ultimate goal of not leaving any Spaniard behind and helping the most vulnerable communities of our country to go through this unprecedented situation.

A €200 billion relief package against effects of coronavirus, the greatest mobilization of resources in our country's entire democratic history and equivalent to around 20% of our GDP, has been announced by the Government. This initiative has found wide inter-party support in the Spanish Parliament. Half of the money is tied to a public guarantee scheme to ensure liquidity for struggling businesses. Another €17 billion is being earmarked to support the groups most likely to suffer from the effects of the pandemic. The rest will be obtained from private resources. You can find a more detailed description of the measure taken by the Government in the Annex below.



We are aware of the economic and budgetary impact of these measures for our society and its future, and we acknowledge that other EU governments are also taking similar actions. We are proud of working tirelessly on saving lives and ensuring decent living conditions for all citizens, particularly for the most vulnerable ones. We are sure that Spain as the rest of Europe will defeat this virus, but we need to overcome this crisis in the best possible way without compromising our future.

In this sense, PSOE and the Government of Spain are convinced that we need a bold European action to fight this crisis, but also a truly European common response, based on solidarity and common interest, to tackle its economic and social consequences. We welcome some of the actions that the European Commission and the European Central Bank have been announcing, but we are afraid that they will not be enough. Spain advocates for the establishment of a European debt mutualisation scheme. Eurobonds and other measures are crucial for the EU in a moment when public opinions in our countries are increasingly demanding a stronger involvement of the Union in our efforts to tackle this defining crisis.

If we fail to match our citizens' expectations we would be inflicting a tremendous damage to EU's credibility in our countries and enhancing euro-skepticism across Europe, feeding national-populist movements that represent a real danger to our democracies.

We would like to thank you again for the solidarity that we have seen from your countries. Do not hesitate to contact us should you require additional information about the measures taken by the Spanish Government of the covid-19 situation in Spain.

Best regards.

A blue ink signature of Iratxe García Pérez, written in a cursive style.

Iratxe García Pérez
PSOE Secretary for the EU

A blue ink signature of Héctor Gómez Hernández, written in a cursive style.

Héctor Gómez Hernández
PSOE International Relations Secretary



ANNEX:

Some of the main social and economic measures adopted by the Spanish Government as part of the €200 billion relief package against effects of coronavirus include:

- €100bn of state loan guarantees for business aimed at ensuring liquidity, especially for small and medium-sized companies
- Workers will be able to receive unemployment benefits even if they have not paid enough in social security contributions.
- A €600m investment to help vulnerable people and those depending on social services.
- Lifting social security contribution requirements for small and medium businesses who do not lay off workers, and adjusting the social security system contributions made by self-employed workers whose income plummets due to the crisis.
- The decree also allows workers to adapt and reduce their working hours, by as much as 100% if necessary, if they need to provide care to dependents.
- A €30-million allocation will also be made to reinforce scientific research to develop a vaccine and a cure for covid-19.
- Measures for the self-employed workers that will allow them to suspend payments of their Social Security contributions for six months with no interest.
- A mortgage as well as utility bills holiday for the self-employed that have no activity and employees whose income had fallen due to the crisis or had been made unemployed.



- The freezing of evictions of vulnerable members of society for six months, as well as the extension of current rental contracts that are due to expire for a further six months.
- The Government will also put a microcredit scheme in action, making funds available at 0% interest to people who need help paying their rent that would be paid back in a period of 6 to 10 years.
- Basic utilities such as water, electricity and gas would be guaranteed during this exceptional period, and that no one would see any of these services cut off.
- Temporary workers whose contracts have been terminated due to the state of alarm will receive a €440 payment and house cleaners who are signed up to the social security system will also receive a payment.
- Suspension of repayments of consumer loans for anyone who is in a vulnerable economic situation.
- Alternative accommodation for victims of violence against women in hotels should the usual network of women's shelters not have rooms available.
- Guaranteed attention for victims of sex trafficking and forced prostitution.
- Restrictions on advertising for online gaming during the state of alarm.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, through its network of 215 embassies and consulates, has repatriated more than 18,000 Spaniards from other countries, with the help of the European Commission and other member States.