



## Spain, Burden-Sharing, and NATO Deterrence Policy

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### Introduction

This article is intended to offer “food for thought” in the debate about the future of NATO deterrence policy and the new Strategic Concept, from the point of view of a Non-Nuclear Weapons State (NNWS), focusing on the problems of burden-sharing and risk- and responsibility-sharing within the Atlantic Alliance.

Because Spain may offer a useful illustration of the problems that some allies could face in the burden-sharing realm, this article explains the evolution of Spanish policy regarding nuclear weapons, deterrence and burden-sharing, taking into account certain domestic limitations, threat perceptions and vital and strategic interests. Spain has maintained a posture as a responsible partner in spite of its unique domestic political situation, with attitudes in Spanish society against NATO, the United States, and the military. Domestically, the Spanish position could be politically difficult if the Spanish government’s policy concerning nuclear weapons were to change. Nevertheless, successive Spanish governments have maintained firm and steady support for NATO nuclear deterrence policy, including its membership in the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. Moreover, Spain and the United States have a Defense Agreement that establishes the rules for managing the nuclear weapons issue bilaterally.

Thus, Spain has been facing the dual situation produced by the responsibilities derived from its commitment as a responsible and reliable NATO partner, and the necessity of defending its vital interests, which are not always clearly covered by NATO collective defence and extended deterrence. The development of this process in recent years has produced a difficult situation and dangerous contradictions for Spanish vital interests and national security.

### The Spanish Domestic Context: Limitations as a NNWS in Security and Defense Policy

Spanish society could be characterized as pacifist, antimilitarist, and anti-American (politically, not culturally), as well as opposed to nuclear energy and generally “green” in its attitudes. Although in 2008 support for NATO increased by 11 percent in relation to 2007, it is the European society least favorable to the Alliance.<sup>[1]</sup> The anti-Americanism is mainly a reaction against the Bush Administration’s foreign policy, but it also converges with the result of the social evolution after the Franco years (1939-1975) and the era of the so-called “Transición,” the change from an authoritarian regime to a full democracy. This regime was sustained mainly by the Spanish Armed Forces, and this created an anti-military reaction. The myth of the defeat in the Spanish-

American War, although this aspect has almost disappeared, and the belief in Spanish society, fed above all by leftist parties (the Communist Party as well as socialist parties) that, thanks to the support of the United States, Franco's regime could survive during almost 40 years, created a strong current of anti-Americanism in Spanish society, which was not liberated from Nazism by the U.S. armed forces after the Second World War, and which did not perceive the U.S. presence in Spain and Europe as an essential deterrent against the threat posed by the Soviet Union. On the contrary, the U.S. presence in Spain since the 1953 defense agreements created the perception that the United States supported Franco's regime and had imposed an unbalanced agreement to install naval and air bases in the country with an important nuclear capability. This situation, although it was progressively balanced by Spanish policies during the course of the Cold War, involved managing a balance between a steady policy to regain more independence and flexibility from the United States (by seeking integration in international and European institutions) and the necessity (for almost the same reason) to maintain Spain's reputation as a reliable and responsible partner in the Western security structure during the Cold War.[2]

This historical background, the low profile of foreign and defense issues in domestic politics, and certain surviving trends to opacity and secrecy in this realm could explain the continuing reluctance of Spanish Governments to open public discussions on security and nuclear issues. To this could be added the tendency to identify nuclear energy with nuclear weapons exploited above all by radical leftist sectors (which have become green sectors in some cases) that defend the same anti-military and anti-American positions. The famous campaign carried out by the left parties against NATO, nuclear energy and nuclear weapons was in the same stream as the campaigns carried out by leftist and green parties across Europe during the 1980s. However, the image of the Spanish Armed Forces has been improving during the last 20 years thanks to humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, and the creation of an image of an "Armed NGO." In a similar way, and without the shadow of the Cold War, there has been an improvement in the image of NATO, thanks to humanitarian peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Kosovo: the more multilateral and "peaceful" the operation, the better.[3] But recently these figures have changed, showing reduced support from Spanish public opinion for overseas operations.[4] At the same time, the opening of the energy debate in Europe has created an opportunity for Spanish society to reduce the country's dependence on oil and gas (83 percent of energy consumption). Spain's green and leftist parties have sustained—and now the Spanish government, following the same current as the Obama Administration, has expressed—support for new sources of energy.[5]

## **Spain, Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence 1960-1995: Between Proliferation and Reliability as a Partner in the Western Security Structure**

During most of the Cold War, Spain pursued a nuclear capacity in terms of civil nuclear energy, delivery platforms (submarines) and explosive devices (tactical nuclear weapons). Even though Spain became a NATO member in 1982, Spanish governments did not totally abandon the idea of some kind of nuclear capacity until the country acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1987.

### **Spain as a Nuclear Proliferator State 1960-1980**

General Franco and his Prime Minister Admiral Carrero Blanco looked for nuclear capability for Spain in early 1960s to strengthen Spain's international position, due to the country's international isolation, threat perceptions and security problems. During the Cold War, nuclear capacity was synonymous with special status, and despite the 1953 U.S.-Spain Defense Agreement, General Franco's Spain was to seek a nuclear deterrence capacity. Franco and Carrero Blanco wanted mainly to obtain nuclear submarines for the defense of the Gibraltar Strait, Ceuta and Melilla, and North Africa. In case of a conflict in North Africa, Madrid could not count on NATO (Spain was not a member at that time) nor on the United States, because Morocco was an important U.S. ally in North Africa facing pro-Soviet Algeria. During the 1950s, Spain had obtained funding from the

United States to conduct nuclear research, and in 1963, France also offered to help Spain develop nuclear installations and plutonium production. Spain also had moderate reserves of uranium, and in the 1970s had created a large nuclear development program (with 17 nuclear facilities), three nuclear reactors and a research installation for uranium enrichment. Then, in 1971, a secret report was prepared concerning the production of a tactical nuclear device. In this environment, the Spanish government did not sign the NPT. However, pressure from the Carter Administration beginning in 1977, in conjunction with the freezing of enriched uranium exports for the Spanish civil nuclear program, led the Spanish government to permit the supervision by IAEA inspectors of Spanish nuclear facilities in 1981.

## **Spanish Governments 1982-1995**

In 1982, Spain became a NATO member, but following the election victory of the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE), the new Government decided to suspend the process of integration into the military structure of the Alliance and called a referendum to decide whether Spain should remain within the organization.<sup>[6]</sup> Still, in 1983 Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, who supported the deployment by NATO of U.S. INF missiles in Europe, and did not rule out NPT membership for Spain, still considered the building of nuclear submarines. Even when he presented in 1984 to the Cortes (the Spanish Parliament) the so-called Ten Points on a Peace and Security Policy (Decálogo sobre Paz y Seguridad)<sup>[7]</sup> in order to establish a basis for the restoration of a consensus of all the political forces regarding national security and defence policy, the Spanish government did not yet rule out the nuclear submarine idea. Spanish national security policy was to be based on NATO, the Western European Union (WEU) and U.S.-Spanish relations, and its main goal would be building confidence in Spanish reliability as a Western security partner while reducing its dependence on the United States for security. In 1985 Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez declined to sign the NPT because he considered it unfair. The 1986 referendum proposed the continuation of Spain's NATO membership on the following terms:

- No integration in the NATO integrated military structure;
- Prohibition to install, store or introduce nuclear weapons in Spanish territory; and
- Progressive reduction of the U.S. military presence in Spain, finally achieved in the 1988 US-Spanish Cooperation and Defense Agreement, with the withdrawal of the 401st Wing from Torrejon Air Base at Madrid.

The referendum result endorsed the government position, and from that time on, Spain began to work out its own model for participation in the Alliance, within the limits laid down in the referendum. Nevertheless, successive Spanish governments during the 1990s, in order to maintain the commitment within the Western security framework and the confidence of the NATO Allies, carried out the following measures: Spain acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1987; Spain participated in the NATO Nuclear Planning Group; the Spanish government followed a policy of "not asking" about nuclear weapons deployment (in fact, U.S. Sixth Fleet ships in Spanish ports carried nuclear weapons until, at least, the unilateral disarmament announced for surface ships by the George H.W. Bush Administration in 1991); the Spanish Army started training on Short Range Nuclear Forces (SRNF) use (155mm and 203 mm nuclear shells and Lance missiles), deployment and operations under nuclear conditions in the mid 1980s. At the end of the Cold War, Spain supported German reunification and changes in NATO and the Bosnia intervention. Although the reduction of the U.S. military presence in Spain was carried out, there was an extensive use of air and naval bases in Spanish territory supporting Gulf War operations in 1991.

## **Spain, the 2002 Strategic Defense Review, and the Evolution of Spanish Vital Interests**

The 9/11 attacks speeded up a Strategic Defense Review, already in progress at that moment, as a priority for establishing the main goals for the Spanish defense policy guidelines, according to the National Defense Directive (NDD) 1/2000 (December 1, 2000). The Strategic Defense Review of 2002 (2002 SDR)[8] and the NDD 2000 were the responses to the changing international environment after the end of the Cold War, and the result of the reflection process opened by the NDD 1/1996.

## Spanish Policy Goals 1996-2004

The victory of Jose Maria Aznar's Popular Party in 1996 opened a new chapter in foreign and security policy for Spain. The priority of anti-terrorist policy, above all after 9/11, and an Atlanticist turn, that is, a search for U.S. "special ally" treatment, supporting the Global War on Terror and the Iraq invasion, would be the most remarkable Spanish government objectives along with the reaffirmation of Spain as a major power in the European Union. One of the first measures was the reinforcement of Spain's NATO membership through Spanish participation in the NATO integrated military structure in 1997 and the full support to NATO operations in the Kosovo conflict in 1999. Domestically, Aznar's government focused on the improvement of defense capacity in the Canary Islands-Gibraltar Strait-Balearic Islands Axis, the reaffirmed the defense of Ceuta and Melilla, and finished the professionalization of the Spanish Armed Forces in 2000.

As the international scene changed, the Spanish government was aware of the priority of preparing a new strategic assessment of Spanish interests. However, as the 2002 SDR and successive NDD established, the sovereignty of Spain, its territorial integrity, and its constitutional order are still the country's essential and vital interests; and this includes ensuring the freedom, life and prosperity of its citizens. But, at the same time, in the current international context, the defense of these interests requires not limiting the actions of the State to the national territory since the interests of Spain and the Spanish people extend beyond its borders. This means that in order to promote and defend these interests, Spain should develop an expeditionary capacity for the Spanish Armed Forces. This may open a debate about whether Spain should initiate a force transformation process and whether this process is consistent with Spanish needs and interests. Such a process would also mean choosing between different models for the Spanish Armed Forces.

For centuries, the main areas of interest for Spain have traditionally been Europe, North Africa, the Mediterranean, Latin America, and relations with the United States.[9] Changes in international affairs have pushed Spanish governments to include in this vision Sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia-Pacific region.[10] Spain has, to be sure, maintained interests and presence in these areas before: for instance, a large presence and extensive relations in the Asia-Pacific region since the sixteenth century, above all in the Philippines, Indochina, Japan, China and some Pacific archipelagos until the 1898 Spanish-American War.[11] Thus, the main Spanish strategic interests can be summed up in six main points: contributing to stability through NATO and the EU; peace and stability in the Mediterranean; freedom of economic and trade exchanges and communications; security for raw materials supplies; ending terrorism; and recovery of sovereignty over Gibraltar.[12]

From this point of view, the threat assessment carried out by the 2002 SDR is similar to those in NATO's Strategic Concept in 1999, the European Union's European Security Strategy in 2003, or the U.S. National Security Strategy in 2006: terrorism, organized crime, and the proliferation of WMD; failed, weak or fragile states, as well as regional conflicts; the struggle for access to basic resources; climate change; and cyberspace attacks. Regarding nuclear weapons, the 2002 SDR establishes that Spain pursues a strong WMD non-proliferation policy, including dual-use technology, exports and missiles[13] and that it is a priority to pursue measures and collective actions, including missile defense, to stop the proliferation of WMD and delivery systems. From this point of view, the structure of Spanish territory, including the Canary Islands, Ceuta and

Melilla in North Africa, and the Gibraltar Strait as a main communications line (above all, for energy supplies) could be at risk. This possibility is a key factor for Spanish defense strategy.

## **Burden-Sharing and Consultations: The Case of Spain**

In a progressively more complex international environment, NATO has conducted an enlargement process that has led to Alliance membership for a large number of countries which have different interests, expectations, and threat and security perceptions. The greater the number of NATO members in such a complex international environment, the more numerous the adversaries, threats, and risks (real and/or perceived) in the conflict spectrum, and the greater the difficulties for NATO's deterrence posture, even in the case of adopting a "tailored deterrence" approach.<sup>[14]</sup> Furthermore, this outreach process has been a clear trend for NATO, taking into account the Partnership for Peace, the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, and the Alliance's relations with contact countries. The increased number of members and partners has created interest divergences that affect bargaining and threat perceptions in the Alliance.<sup>[15]</sup>

The different dynamics produced by these factors constitute the international and Alliance framework in which Spain has created its own security and defense posture. From this point of view, and according to the domestic constraints seen above, Spain maintains a posture of dissuasion more than a posture of deterrence, sustaining and improving its own general defense capacity, although necessarily with the support of Allies through collective defense and shared security: "The Armed Forces must maintain a deterrent and reaction capability that is sufficient to defend Spain. Furthermore, there is an increasing demand by Spanish society for the public administrations to respond effectively in serious situations of emergency, risk, catastrophe and other security needs."<sup>[16]</sup>

## **Spain, Burden-Sharing and Nuclear Deterrence: a Difficult Balance between Capacity and Vital Interests**

However, scarce resources and the real defense and security requirements of Spain and its armed forces will probably create difficulties in the path to force transformation. The Spanish Armed Forces have been engaged in a process of modernization and professionalization since the end of the 1990s. Under Conservative governments, this was seen as an adaptation to the new security environment (the end of the post-Cold War era and then the start of the post-9/11 era) and the enhancement of Spanish capabilities to operate jointly with NATO and European Allies. The new Socialist governments since 2004 have put more emphasis on seeing this process as a mechanism for a progressive "Europeanization" of security and defense. Spain has been trying to strengthen its posture internationally and reinforcing its position in the Balearic Islands-Gibraltar Strait-Canary Islands Axis through the renewal of the U.S.-Spain Defense and Cooperation Agreement of 1988, modified in 2002. The Spanish government mainly offered during the review of the 1988 U.S.-Spain Defense and Cooperation Agreement in 2002 the enlargement of the Rota Naval Station and the use of Moron Air base and to allow U.S. Navy and Air Force information services to operate in Spain under the supervision of national authorities.<sup>[17]</sup> At the same time, Spain introduced ambiguity as a deterrence mechanism through article 11.2 of the U.S.-Spain Defense Agreement. This article left to the Spanish government the decision to install, store or introduce nuclear weapons or other non-conventional weapons in Spanish territory. This article does not take into account the second point of the 1986 NATO referendum.<sup>[18]</sup>

Why did the Spanish government, after Spanish military integration in NATO, seek a closer relationship with the United States, reversing a policy of reducing Spanish dependence, carried out ever since the Franco years? This was probably due to new assessments of strategic requirements after the Cold War and 9/11, and from a domestic point of view, the antiterrorist

policy of Prime Minister Aznar, this started an international campaign to defeat the ETA terrorist gang. However, from this point of view, it appears that the Spanish government valued the viability of NATO collective defense to assure Spanish vital interests (for instance, territorial sovereignty in Ceuta and Melilla), and, in this vein, regarded NATO nuclear deterrence strategy as useful to Spanish security and defense interests. Probably it is difficult to respond to this question. Certainly, Spanish Conservative governments did not see matters this clearly, taking into account their efforts to reinforce the Spanish position through a renewed U.S.-Spain Defense Agreement. In spite of this situation, Spain maintains its NATO commitments, including its support for NATO nuclear deterrence policy (including its membership in the Nuclear Planning Group), deployments and operations in the Mediterranean, Bosnia and Afghanistan; and Spain has pushed forward a constructive dialogue with Russia.[19]

Nevertheless, Spain cannot copy the U.S. force transformation process because of the scarcity of resources and differences in perceptions and interests. Spain has limited expeditionary capabilities, with no attack helicopters and no long-range strategic sea- and airlift.[20] The Spanish Navy has defensive and offensive capacity that serves national defense and multilateral operations through the Principe de Asturias carrier group,[21] twelve helicopters SH-2F LAMPS (ASW and ASUW), four Aegis Frigates F-100 (two more expected in two to four years)[22], and the future S-80 attack submarines, both armed with conventional Tomahawk cruise missiles. Moreover, the Spanish Air Force has also obtained cruise missile capacity, buying 100 German-designed Taurus cruise missiles for the F-18 and the Eurofighter EF-2000 Typhoon. Due to Spanish overseas commitments, the Spanish government said last year that it would ask the Spanish Cortes to lift the limitation of 3,000 Spanish forces for overseas operations.

Thus, the pursuit of an expeditionary capacity reduces further the scarce resources of the Spanish military forces for defending Spanish vital interests (above all, in terms of territorial integrity). For instance, the Balearic Islands-Gibraltar Strait-Canary Islands Axis is a Spanish vital defense objective, including Ceuta and Melilla in North Africa; but Spain has limited resources to fully cover this area, maintaining meanwhile a sustained effort to conduct a force transformation process. Spain may be reducing its presence in an area of vital interests in order to address NATO burden-sharing issues while there may not be real sensitivity within the Atlantic Alliance about the importance of protecting these Spanish interests.

Although the Spanish Navy and Air Force have been developing capacities focused on the Balearic Islands-Gibraltar Strait-Canary Islands Axis, at the same time, coastal defense has been reduced to regimental size and its HQ at Tarifa, Cadiz, has been dismantled, including the removal of two battalions of the Spanish Legion[23]. The withdrawal could be a consequence of scarcity of resources (above all, budget constraints due to the international economic crisis) and/or policy considerations. To a certain point, Spain has interests and priorities different from those of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels. For example, one might note the absence of NATO collective defense in the case of Ceuta and Melilla (both of these Spanish cities are in North Africa, outside of the area covered by the North Atlantic Treaty). Moreover, other allies have distinct interests in the area: for instance, the reinforcement of the British military presence in Gibraltar,[24] the possible construction of a U.S. naval facility in Ksar-Kebir, and the selling by France of Fremm frigates and Super Puma attack helicopters to Morocco. Moreover, there is a U.S. interest in installing the new African Command (AFRICOM) in Tan Tan, Morocco, near the Western Sahara border, instead of choosing the Rota Air and Naval Station or the Canary Islands in Spanish territory.

## **Conclusion: Spain as a Two-Faced Janus?**

Since 2008, there has been a change in the Spanish position due to new U.S. and French policies toward NATO. Although the Spanish government has put emphasis since 2004 on supporting the enhancement of Spanish capabilities to operate jointly with NATO and European Allies as a mechanism for a progressive “Europeanization” of security and defense, according to

the NDD 2008, "The Atlantic Alliance is still the basis of the collective defense of its members. Therefore, the final objective of a European defense developed by the European Union itself should be designed as a reinforcement of transatlantic relations. In this context, Spain supports a NATO endowed with adequate military capabilities for action in order to effectively face new global challenges in the area of security and defense. Still the security of Spain is also linked to the security of the Mediterranean area, and for this reason it is crucial to have the Mediterranean become an area of peace, stability and shared prosperity."<sup>[25]</sup>

The "NATO face" leads Spain to support the transformation process of NATO so that it is endowed with the necessary capabilities for responding to new risks and threats. Spain will support deterrence by means other than nuclear weapons or by all means in NATO, putting greater emphasis on the means other than nuclear weapons, at least, so long as the official Spanish position on nuclear weapons does not change, that is, as expressed in the 1999 NATO Strategic Concept, paragraphs 10, 62, 63 and 64.<sup>[26]</sup> Tailored deterrence (above all, related to non-nuclear, conventional and non-military means) could probably supply the Spanish government a possible position for NATO's future deterrence posture. This, of course, does not diminish the ultimate capacity of NATO nuclear forces to deter certain threats.

The "other face" of Spain might not find enough benefits in burden-sharing in NATO nuclear deterrence policy in the future if there is no response for Spanish vital interests. This could be dangerous for Spain's security interests in the long term and could produce serious problems with North Africa in the future, creating a security dilemma for Spain. This would be a paradox: Spain would try to sustain its burden-sharing responsibilities in NATO but would be unable to defend its vital interests. Perhaps this situation is already in progress, leading Spain to relinquish its responsibilities in the area, in a turn to an appeasement posture. In Roman mythology, a dual-faced Janus was the god used to symbolize change and transitions such as the progression from past to future. Janus was worshipped in the *Ianus geminus*, a kind of temple with gates at each end. In the course of wars, the gates of the Janus temple were opened, and in its interior sacrifices and divinations were held to forecast the outcome of military deeds. Unfortunately, the divinations do not seem very favorable for Spain.

## About the Author

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2. For an explanation of the evolution of Spanish security policy see Marquina, Antonio, *España en la política de seguridad occidental 1936-1986*, ed. Ejército, Ministerio de Defensa, Madrid, 1986.

3. See Instituto de Cuestiones Internacionales y Política Exterior (INCIPE), *La Cumbre de Bucarest: preparando el 60ª aniversario de la OTAN*, INCIPE-RIE, Madrid, May 2008, 77-80.
4. Noya, Javier, "La opinión pública española y las misiones de las fuerzas armadas en el exterior," *ARI no. 121/2007*, November 2007. With the perception of the possibility of a higher number of casualties, Spanish public opinion has reduced support for Spanish Armed Forces operations overseas.
5. The debate on nuclear energy in Spain was opened by former Spanish officials, including former Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, the late former EU Energy Commissioner Loyola de Palacio, and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ana Palacio. Of the OECD countries, Spain is the third most unsuccessful in fulfilling the Kyoto goals and spends four billion euros a year to buy emission rights from developing countries.
6. For some experts, this movement was also a mechanism to pressure about Spanish membership in the European Community. See Val Cid, C. del, *Opinión pública y opinión publicada, Los españoles y el referéndum de la OTAN*, Centro de Investigaciones Sociales & Siglo XXI de España, Madrid, 1996.
7. The Ten Points established the following guidelines for Spanish security and defense policy: no participation in the NATO integrated military structure; continuing US-Spain Defense Relations, but with a progressive reduction of the U.S. military presence in Spanish territory; no nuclear weapons presence in Spain and accession to the NPT; integration in the Western European Union; Spanish presence in international disarmament institutions; reinforcement of bilateral defense relations with other Western European countries; and creation of a Joint Defense Plan.
8. [Strategic Defense Review](#), Ministerio de Defensa, Secretaría General Técnica, 2003, Madrid, at: [http://www.mde.es/descarga/RED\\_Ingles\\_vol\\_1.pdf](http://www.mde.es/descarga/RED_Ingles_vol_1.pdf).
9. Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero located for the first time for a Socialist government transatlantic relations second only after Europe in Spanish foreign policy priorities. See Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, "En interés de España: una política exterior comprometida," Address at the Museo del Prado, June 16, 2008, *ARI no. 9*, Real Instituto Elcano, June, 17, 2008.
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12. [2002 SDR](#), 123-125.
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16. [NDD 2008](#), 5.

17. This last point was developed by an agreement between Spain and the United States in April 2007.

18. Article 11.2 repeats word for word Article 4 of the 1988 U.S.-Spain Defense Agreement.

19. Interview with Spanish officials at NATO Headquarters in Brussels (May 2007).

20. The Spanish Armed Forces are waiting for Tiger attack helicopters, the Strategic Airlift Airbus A-400 and a Strategic Projection Ship, the Juan Carlos I (L-61), a strategic lift ship, similar to the U.S. LHD Wasp class, which could be also used as a carrier (30 planes and helicopters) thanks to a ski-jump.

21. There is a future carrier project, the Carlos III R-21, similar in design to the new French Carriers.

22. The F-105 (Roger de Lauria), and the F-106 (Juan de Austria). There are also six F-80 frigates.

23. The II Bandera (battalion), Tercio (regiment) Gran Capitán (Melilla) and the V Bandera, Tercio Duque de Alba II (Ceuta). These are some of the dissolved units that include communications, HQ staff and anti-armored battalions. The official explanation is the redeployment of the Spanish Armed forces carried out by the Transition Plan for the Armed Forces. In fact, there will be no reduction in numbers in either city, but these units are among the best forces of the Spanish Army.

24. On July 20, 2009, reversing 300 years of Spanish policy, Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, although facing the opposition of the Conservative Popular Party, became the first serving Spanish Minister to officially visit Gibraltar, a British colony since 1713, when the Treaty of Utrecht was signed.

25. [NDD 2008](#), 5.

26. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. [The Alliance's Strategic Concept](#). Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C. 24 April 1999.