

## Speech by Felipe González Márquez (Madrid, 12 June 1985)

**Caption:** On 12 June 1985, at the official ceremony for the accession of Spain to the European Economic Community (EEC), the Spanish Prime Minister, Felipe González Márquez, delivers a speech highlighting Spain's desire to participate actively in the European venture.

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[...]

'Today we are taking a step of historic importance for Spain and for Europe. On affixing our signatures to the Treaty of Accession to the European Communities, we have established a basic landmark towards completing the unity of our Old Continent and also towards overcoming the centuries-old isolation of Spain.

We are contributing to the attainment of the aims set forth in the Preamble to the Rome Treaty...

... Today we can say with satisfaction that the democratically elected representatives of the Spanish people... were right when we gave our unanimous support to Spain's application to join the European Community, thereby giving greater strength and backing to the Government when the negotiations started. Thus we let it be known from the very beginning that the goal of our accession to the Europe represented by the Community was a State matter because it reflected the desire of an overwhelming majority of Spaniards for whom Spain's entry into Europe was identified with its adherence to the ideals of freedom, progress and democracy.

Previously, other Spaniards, whom I should like to call to mind here today, contributed their efforts and their farsightedness at decisive moments for the building of Europe, when they attended the 1948 Hague Congress and that of Munich in 1962, at the cost of personal risk. I also wish to recall all those who, with exemplary devotion, have participated from the time of the 1970 Agreement until now in the negotiations that culminate today in Spain's reincorporation into the natural setting to which it belongs...

... On reaching this point, I should like - on behalf of the Spanish people - to send warm and cordial greetings to the people of Portugal...

... From the Iberian Peninsula, Portugal and Spain showed the old world the way to new worlds, expanding their frontiers not only geographically but also spiritually, as they decisively promoted the progress of the thought, knowledge and technology of the age of the Renaissance.

Now as well, the two countries are venturing out together on a new stage, laden with challenges and promise - an undertaking that makes Europe complete, that reinforces the ties that link our two peoples and will allow us, within the Community institutions, to accentuate Europe's extension towards the countries of Latin America and Africa that belong to our cultural milieu...

... For Spain, this fact means the culmination of a process of overcoming our centuries-old isolation and of sharing in a common destiny with the other countries of Western Europe.

This undoubtedly will involve a challenge to modernize our economy and our society, that in turn will require a change of mentality and structures. It will be an effort of adaptation even greater than that made by the founding countries of the European Community, because we are late in joining a process that is already well on its way.

I am confident, however, that our society (both workers and employers, professional people, technicians and researchers, and men and women everywhere in Spain) will respond to this challenge. By means of everybody's efforts and the enthusiasm of a dynamic and young people, we can face the challenge of economic, social and technological modernization that will enable us to cross the threshold of the next century with confidence and a firm step...

... We know that there are some within the Community who contemplate the new enlargement with apprehension, since they think that it could ultimately upset the delicate balances established by the founding Treaties, that have already been affected by the passing of time and successive enlargements.

But this must be precisely the reason for treating the enlargement as if it were a catalyst aimed at provoking

profound reflection on the future of Europe, as well as a response to the question of how best to face the challenges of the closing years of the century...

... In so far as Spain is concerned, I wish to make something clear: we shall not be a burden to the Community, nor an obstacle that hinders its progress towards better forms of political and economic integration. On the contrary, while defending our essential interests, we shall cooperate in the full measure of our strength for the progress of European unity.

From the very beginning, the Government of Spain states its resolute will to advance with those who wish to advance...'