

Press conference held by José Maria Aznar and Romano Prodi (Valencia, 16 September 1996)

Caption: On 16 September 1996, at the end of a meeting in Valencia between José Maria Aznar, Spanish Prime Minister, and Romano Prodi, President of the Italian Council of Ministers, the two men reaffirm their determination to see Spain and Italy participate in the third stage of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

Source: Conferencia de Prensa junto con el Presidente del Consejo de Ministros de Italia, después de la cumbre Hispano-Italiana. Valencia, 16 de septiembre de 1996. [EN LÍNEA]. [Madrid]: Presidencia del Gobierno, [22.08.2005]. Disponible sur <http://www.la-moncloa.es>.

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Press conference held by the Prime Minister, José María Aznar, and the Italian Prime Minister, Romano Prodi, following the Spanish–Italian Summit (Valencia, 16 September 1996)

[...]

Mr Aznar: — We have talked, understandably, about Economic and Monetary Union, and the Ministers responsible have also discussed it. I want to make it quite clear that both our countries consider the process of Economic and Monetary Union logical and desirable and wish to achieve it as soon as possible. With specific reference to the Spanish position, let me say that Spain is determined to participate in Economic and Monetary Union from the outset, i.e. to fulfil all the conditions on 31 December 1997. As I have already said, that is a very clear and categorical attitude on the part of the Spanish Government, which will take — as it is already doing — all the measures required to ensure that Spain embarks on the third phase of Economic and Monetary Union from the very beginning.

[...]

The Ministers for Economic Affairs have discussed the legal arrangements applying to the euro and the relations between the currencies that remain outside and those inside — all of this, I stress once more, against the background of the clearest possible determination to participate in Monetary Union from the outset.

[...]

Mr Prodi: — After such a perfect summing-up, it only remains for me to thank all those who attended this Italian–Spanish Summit and all who helped make it a success. I shall not repeat what the Spanish Prime Minister, Mr Aznar, has said, since it wholly reflected the structure, proceedings and conclusions of our meeting. I would simply stress that the policy of joining the European currency from the outset, and the convergence policy enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty, are objectives we are pursuing in common — Italy’s position being entirely consistent with that of Spain. Commitment to being an integral part of the new Europe is common to our two countries.

[...]

Q. — May I put the following question to Mr Prodi: given that Italy and Spain face rather similar problems in participating in the final phase of Monetary Union, do you believe that some form of mutual consultation or coordination would be useful or beneficial to ensure that both countries arrive in time at the final phase so that the southern Mediterranean is not left out?

[...]

Mr Prodi: — The answer to the first question is that we have decided on close coordination along the road to Monetary Union, both our countries having confirmed their determination to form part of the hard core. The European Union is our point of reference, since we believe that our two countries can build their future only on the basis of Europe.

Mr Aznar: — The determination of the Spanish Government is very clear. As Mr Prodi pointed out, and as I have already said, we have a whole series of concordant points in our positions on the arrangements for Monetary Union and Economic Union. I think that that is clear enough. I have already referred to them: the legal arrangements applying to the euro, the relations between the currencies that remain outside and those inside, the rules governing the European Monetary System. And then, of course, there is the situation of each country, which each country will have to resolve for itself.

Spain’s position is very clear: it will do everything necessary to pass the test on 31 December 1997; it is going to take the necessary decisions and will be in the first phase of Monetary Union from day one. Understandably, it wants Italy to do likewise. For Spain itself, the decision — the Government’s decision — is as stated.

[...]

Q. — For Mr Prodi. Mr Aznar spoke of Spain's clearest possible determination to be among the front runners from the outset. He said that Spain would take all the measures required to comply with all the rules and that it would be among the front runners. I should like to know whether you are able to say the same with as much determination as Mr Aznar.

[...]

Mr Prodi: — As far as the Italian language permits, our statements are intended to be equally solemn. Both Heads of Government have confirmed their countries' commitment to enter the single currency from the outset. We have said so unequivocally.

[...]