

Official statement by the acting Spanish Prime Minister about Brexit

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USPA NEWS - The acting Spanish Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, in an appearance in La Moncloa palace, praised the outcome of the referendum in the UK, which has won the exit option defending Britain from the EU. This is the official statement by the acting Spanish Prime Minister about Brexit.

"Ladies and gentlemen, very good morning, thank you very much for attending this call. I will read a Government statement. Good morning, the British government has just announced the results of the consultative referendum on the permanence or not the UK in the European Union. The Spanish Government notes with sadness the favorable result for the UK to leave the Union. Now the British Government shall decide how and when, if necessary, to formally notify the European Council's decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union. Only from that moment it will start the procedure provided for in Article 50 of the Maastricht Treaty which governs the voluntary departure of a Member State.

The first consideration of this decision is that I want to convey serenity and tranquility. Although this is the first time that a Member State decides to leave the Union, the Treaties provide a negotiated procedure and orderly departure. This procedure will, in all likelihood, at least two years from the official notification, and in the meantime, and this I emphasize this especially-the legal status of relations between the European Union and the UK will not change at all.

That is, the Treaties of the European Union, all EU legal acquis, freedom of movement of workers, goods, services and capital, the rights of European citizenship and, in general, the whole fabric of relations between the UK and the other members of the European Union and its institutions, fully remains in force. Therefore, I address this message of serenity and tranquility to all Spanish citizens and especially those who by their residence in the UK, or its activities with this country, can feel particularly affected by this British decision.

All rights deriving from their status as Spanish citizens and therefore European continue and remain in full force without restriction until the negotiated settlement the United Kingdom of the European Union, according to the Treaties are not complete. That is, keep Spanish citizens on the same terms their rights in relation to the United Kingdom. Their rights to freedom of movement to work, to contribute and to receive pensions. To invest, to vote or be elected, if any, in local elections the place where they live, they will not be affected at all; expected at least in the next two years.

The same applies to the rights of British citizens residing and working in our country or in the rest of the European Union. Serenity and tranquility for business and economic operators. Freedom of establishment, provision of services, hiring workers, investment, export or import of goods fully remain in force. And finally, in relation to Spanish citizens who work in Gibraltar, they have not changed at all their rights, and they can continue working, trading and circulating with absolute normality in that territory.

The Government has held ministerial coordination meetings in recent weeks to be prepared for this outcome. They have instructed our diplomatic and consular representations in the UK to inform and to attend Spanish citizens resident in the United Kingdom on any questions that they may arise in connection with the consequences of this decision, although, again, their rights and legal situation has not change at all. It has also been meeting with leading Spanish companies operating in the UK. The government is also in constant contact with its European partners and institutions and prepared for any eventuality.

I also want to convey a message of serenity and calm to the markets. Fortunately, Spain now has an economy with strong fundamentals. The current situation of economic growth and job creation, balance of external accounts, the fact that Spain has already much of their needs for housing finance, and a sound financial system, will enable us to bear in terms of solidity, the financial turbulence that may occur. An external contingency like this only a few years ago, could have precipitated to Spain to bankruptcy or bailout. This is not now the case.

At present, it is particularly important to convey a message of institutional and economic stability. They are not moments to feed or add uncertainties. On Tuesday and Wednesday of next week it will meet as planned, the European Council. Before attending this meeting I

will contact the leaders of the main Spanish political forces to get their opinion and criteria and to convey the information available to me at the moment we have those conversations.

Will this, the meeting of the European Council, the opportunity to hear the plans of the British Prime Minister and, on that basis to discuss and decide the next steps. When optionally starts up the negotiation process, the Spanish Government shall defend two fundamental interests: those of all Spanish citizens and those of the European Union. As you know, the Spanish have a very important appointment with the polls on Sunday.

Whatever the result, I think that will represent the feelings of the vast majority of Spaniards defending Spain's commitment to the process of European integration, the importance of the stability and integrity of the euro zone, the continuation of the reform process of our economic and monetary union and greater economic and political integration.

But also, this result should make us reflect on all Member States to strive as never regain the vigor of the founding spirit of the European integration project and recover interest, affection and attraction to him of our citizens. Now that we are finally out of the crisis, we must bring the action of the European Union to the needs of citizens; in particular, putting all the emphasis on growth and employment in order to guarantee and improve the welfare state, which is one of the foundations of European economic and social model, undoubtedly the most safety and welfare provided European citizens in history.

I firmly believe that Spain should remain at the forefront of European integration and this is the general feeling of all Spaniards. With its advances and setbacks, the European Union remains the largest project historic significance since the end of World War II. In just over half a century, Europeans have built the largest area of peace, freedom and prosperity in the entire history of mankind, despite serious setbacks such as we face today, let no one doubt that we will continue working on the construction of tomorrow. Thank you so much everyone for attending. Thank you."

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UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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