

EU ADVOCATES FURTHER ECONOMIC REFORMS

Kananaskis, Canada, June 27, 2002

At the G8 Summit in the Rocky Mountain resort of Kananaskis, Canada, EU President of the Council, Jose Maria AZNAR, referred to the current situation of the international economy, and in particular that of the European Union.

Aznar said he was in favour of undertaking new reforms to make European economy more competitive, in line with the efforts of the Spanish EU Presidency over the last six months.

Canadian Prime Minister Jean CHRETIEN, heard general satisfaction from the leaders of the industrialized nations on their economic outlook.

As well as calling for international support to help Argentina out of its current economic situation, the President of the EU Council also proposed that the G8 Summit conclusions refer to the situation in Brazil, which he described as 'good', despite certain political uncertainties.

Chretien told Aznar he would raise the proposal and if there was consensus he would include it in his closing statement today afternoon.

Aznar also said that Argentina has now met the IMF's requirements for resolving the economic crisis.

Coherent with his statements through the last semester of the Spanish Presidency, Aznar also argued for greater exchange of information and an intensification of the fight against the financial connections used by terrorists.

The fight against terrorism was at the top of the agenda of the first working session of the Summit.

At this first session, European Council President reported on the implementation of the common area of freedom, security and justice in Europe, as one of the steps taken in last week's Seville Council.

During its Presidency, Spain has promoted inclusion of the anti-terrorist effort within Europe's common foreign policy and encouraged initiatives to cut off all means of funding and support for groups linked to terrorism in any way.

In Kananaskis, the Spanish Presidency will also support the option of establishing an international gauge to measure each country's anti-terrorist cooperation. A precedent for this is the EU's earlier introduction of the so-called 'democratic clause' requiring third countries to respect human rights in exchange for development aid.