

The Lizarra declaration - September 12, 1998

Pacification

Factors which have propitiated the peace agreement in Northern Ireland
Potential application in the Basque Country.

Factors which have propitiated the peace agreement in Northern Ireland

- 1.- All the parties involved have accepted the origins and political nature of the conflict and consequently the fact that this must be resolved by political means.
- 2.- The British government and the I.R.A. were aware that neither of the two sides would win a military victory and due to this, accepted the fact that the conflict could go on for a long time if nothing was done to alter this situation.
- 3.- Thanks to the better judgement of all the protagonists in the conflict, confrontation gave way to collaboration (firstly among those with similar but different standpoints, later between opposing sides and finally, between enemies), with the determination not to exclude anyone from these discussions.
- 4.- Among the variety of considerations that have come out of the conflict, one that is of special relevance is the republican movement's long-standing conception of constructing and backing a model to resolve the conflict that would respect all the traditions existing on the island. This contributed to reducing the resistance of those who favoured exclusive dialogues or isolationist policies.
5. Slowly, a sense of dialogue and the easing of tension which came about as a result of these talks replaced the violence and isolationist policies which had dominated the political scene until then. Both sides in the conflict showed signs of goodwill without setting rigid conditions in order to begin talks.
- 6- The recognition of the right to self-determination of all the citizens of Northern Ireland has involved an intensification of their democratic rights both in content (creating new formulas of sovereignty) and form (giving the citizens of Northern Ireland the final say). The political characteristics of the peace agreement include the idea that the negotiations have taken place not with the intention of winning the conflict, but of resolving it. All the political traditions existing on the island have been included and all the political projects have been afforded the same chance of success, without any limitation other than the backing of the democratic majority.
- 7.- Several international factors have played a significant role: The firm support and direct participation of the government and President of the United States in the resolution of the conflict; the acceptance of several Institutions of the European Union (a clear example of this is the substantial economic aid which has been promised), as well as the political support and advice offered by the government and President of South Africa throughout the process.

Potential application in the Basque Country.

In accordance with the characteristics of the [peace process and agreement in Ireland](#), we consider that it may be possible to find a way to resolve the conflict that affects the Basque

Country if the following guidelines of conduct and action are adhered to:

IDENTIFICATION

The origins of the Basque conflict are historical. It is a political conflict in which the Spanish State and the French State are implicated. It must be resolved by political means.

There are discrepancies concerning the roots of the conflict and its continuance, expressed in the concepts of a) territoriality, b) a determination of who has the right to take decisions in this matter and c) political sovereignty. These constitute the basic questions that must be resolved.

METHOD

The political resolution of the conflict will become a reality only through a process of dialogue and open negotiation. There will be no exclusions as to who will be involved in the discussions and these will have the participation of all sectors of Basque society.

PROCESS

Preliminary stage

In order to propitiate a favourable outcome for the talks, the process of dialogue and negotiation may be assisted by multilateral conversations that do not set insurmountable preliminary conditions on those involved in the conflict.

Settlement stage

The process of negotiation and resolution in the proper sense of the word, which involves goodwill and the undertaking to deal with the causes of the conflict, will be carried out under conditions that ensure the permanent absence of all expressions of violence from the conflict.

NATURE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiations must be all-embracing in the sense that they must deal with and respond to all the central issues of the conflict, as well as those which have arisen as a consequence of this. In this sense, negotiations must not be conceived as a process for the advancement of individual interests but as a means to resolve the conflict.

KEYS TO THE RESOLUTION

This means that all negotiations held to resolve the conflict must be free of any specific impositions. The plurality of Basque society must be respected, all political projects must be provided with the same chances of success, the democratic rights of the citizens of the Basque Country must be intensified in the sense that they are to be given the final say as to the shaping of their future and the States involved in the conflict must respect any decision that may be taken. The Basque Country must make its voice heard and decide.

RESULTING SCENARIO

The agreement to resolve the dispute shall not contain rigid frameworks of a definitive nature, but shall enable the creation of frameworks open to any new formulas that respond to the traditions and aspirations to sovereignty of the citizens of the Basque Country.

Signatories to the Declaration

AB, HB, PNV, EA, IU, BATZARRE ZUTIK, ELA, LAB, EHNE, ESK-CUIS, STEE-EILAS, EZKER SINDIKALA, HIRU, GOGOA, AMNISTIAREN ALDEKO BATZORDEAK, SENIDEAK, BAKEA ORAIN, ELKARRI, EGIZAN, HERRIA 2000 ELIZA, CERNIKA BATZORDEA, AUTO- DETERMINAZIOREN BILTZARRAK.