

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT? MITIGATION IN SPANISH AND BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES

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ABSTRACT

The main goal of this paper is to analyse the mitigation strategies politicians use in parliament. We will compare the different strategies that two different head of states use in their speeches. Specifically, we will study the speeches uttered by Mr. Cameron (Ex-Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) and Mr. Rajoy (President of Spain). Both of them delivered speeches that dealt with, among other subjects, the European Council. When dealing with mitigation strategies, Fraser and Caffi say that there are “shields” that “dislocate,” “displace” or “de-focalize” the source of the utterance. These displacement strategies are related to any of the three basic components of the deictic expressions: the “actantial” and the spatio-temporal component. In this specific corpus, we will analyse the role of the first person plural pronouns as mitigation strategies. As we will see, in both cases we could observe a dislocation of the action but they go in different directions depending on the nationality of the head of the government. In the case of the British Ex-Prime Minister the dislocation is going inwards (House of Commons and British citizens) and in the case of the Spanish President is going outwards (EU).

KEYWORDS: mitigation strategies, political discourse, inclusive and exclusive “we,” parliament.

RESUMEN

El objetivo principal de este trabajo es analizar las estrategias de mitigación que los políticos usan en el parlamento. Compararemos las diferentes estrategias que dos diferentes jefes de estado utilizan en sus discursos. Específicamente, estudiaremos los discursos pronunciados por el Sr. Cameron (Ex Primer Ministro del Reino Unido) y el Sr. Rajoy (Presidente de España). Ambos pronunciaron discursos que abordaron, entre otros temas, el Consejo Europeo. Cuando se trata de estrategias de mitigación, Fraser y Caffi dicen que hay «escudos» que «dislocan», «desplazan» o «desfocalizan» la fuente del enunciado. Estas estrategias de desplazamiento se relacionan con cualquiera de los tres componentes básicos de las expresiones deícticas: el *actantial* y el componente espacio-temporal. En este corpus específico, analizaremos el papel de los pronombres plurales de primera persona como estrategias de mitigación. Como veremos, en ambos casos podemos observar una dislocación de la acción pero van en diferentes direcciones dependiendo de la nacionalidad del jefe del gobierno. En el caso del Ex Primer Ministro británico la dislocación va hacia adentro (Cámara de los Comunes y ciudadanos británicos) y en el caso del presidente español va hacia fuera (la UE)

PALABRAS CLAVE: estrategias de mitigación, discurso político, «nosotros» inclusivo y exclusivo, parlamento.



1. INTRODUCTION

In real life, our utterances are usually modulated. This is something we cannot negate, when we are not sure about something or when we do not want to be rude or when we want to de-responsabilize ourselves of an action, we weaken the operation that is taking place.

Some authors (Brown and Levinson; Haverkate) agree that the main reason for this modulation or mitigation process is facework but others (Caffi) claim that this is a cognitive strategy in which an “actant” goes through a de-responsabilization process. Additionally, mitigation strategies increase the emotive distance because there is uncertainty regarding “‘Who is speaking?’ ‘On whose behalf is one speaking?’ ‘And why does s/he need to hide his/her voice behind another’s voice?’” (Caffi 904).

As mentioned before, this is something very common in “real life,” but in this paper what we want to know is to what extent this is the same in a scenario in which there is a very high level of adversity and a constant dialectic battle. Specifically, we will focus on the parliament because in this context mitigation would acquire a special relevance. This is the reason why we selected this specific situation. But we wanted to try to discover if these mitigation strategies are similar or different depending on the cultural traits of the person who is using them. For this reason, the main goal of this study is to reveal what kind of displacement strategies (specifically in relation the role of the first person plural pronouns as mitigation strategies) each head of state prefers to use in their parliamentary speeches. This study will focus on possible differences and similarities.

2. MITIGATION

Mitigation could be defined as a pragmatic, cognitive and linguistic behaviour the main purpose of which is reduction of vulnerability (Martinovski). We can approach mitigation from a narrow or from a broad perspective. In the narrow sense, it is viewed as part of the wider concept of politeness. In this case, mitigation would refer to the set of politeness strategies speakers use to attenuate the impact of face threatening acts (FTAs), more specifically, illocutionary directive acts. According to Brown and Levinson, people use politeness strategies in order to help preserve each other’s face needs (avoid face threatening acts) and mitigation would be one of these strategies. But in the broad sense, mitigation is taken as “the result of the weakening of interactional parameters such as cognitive commitment, emotive involvement, topical salience, etc.” (Caffi 48). In other words, mitigation is approached as a type of strategic behaviour in a goal-oriented activity in which several interactional variables (e.g. commitment to proposition, degree of (in)directness of the illocution, endorsement of a social role, emotive involvement, topical salience, etc.) are taken into account (Caffi).

Mitigating operations may have two different abstract scopes. On the one hand, it is the proposition (producing vagueness) and, on the other hand, the illocution (producing indirectness). But a third type may be added: the deictic origin



of the utterance (Bühler). This one is related to the detachment of the utterance from its actual utterance source. This is very common in impersonal constructions when used as mitigating devices. According to Caffi (647) “Deleting the source of the utterance and assigning it to other sources is a very frequent strategy by which speakers avoid taking responsibility.” Taking into account these three types of scopes, Caffi extends Lakoff’s metaphor and talks about “bushes,” “hedges” and “shields.” With different labels, Caffi covered the same concepts as Prince, Frader, and Bosk. Whereas “bushes” and “hedges” are linked to the proposition and the illocution of the utterance, “shields” are related to the “I-here-now.” For example, when somebody uses a “deictic shield,” s/he is negating the “I,” “to you” and “in this situation.” But when someone uses bushes or hedges, s/he is modifying the “am saying something” component. Fraser (20-21) explains Caffi’s classification in the following way:

BUSHES, which are lexical expressions that reduce the commitment to the propositional content of the utterance and may introduce vagueness in the interpretation of the utterance and affect the truth value of the proposition.

HEDGES, which are lexical expressions whose scope is the illocutionary force of the speech act and attenuates the strength of the force by reducing the speaker’s commitment.

SHIELDS, which are devices to avoid the self-ascription to the utterance and realize an overall shift of responsibility, for instance by introducing a different speaker or by deleting the deictic origin of the utterance.

In contrast to bushes and hedges, there are no explicit operators of mitigation in shields. As Caffi (889) explains, in the case of shields,

the weakening operation takes place at a deeper, more abstract level: for instance, it affects syntax, as in passive transformations, or morphology, as in the shift from first-person singular pronouns to other person pronouns.

In order to fully understand the deep sense of shields, we have to keep in mind words such as “dislocated,” “displaced,” “backgrounding,” “de-focalization” etc. of the source of the utterance. For this reason, we can also talk of a “de-responsabilisation” process of the action because the actor of the action is displaced and this is something that proves very advantageous in the case of political discourse. As Caffi (903) puts it “de-responsabilization is also at the core of mitigation” because all these strategies “seem to entail the benefit of avoiding the direct assumption of responsibility for the utterance” and so the ‘actant’ defines the relationship as one where the speaker is not in control. Additionally, linked to this “de-responsabilisation” there is an increase of the emotive distance because there is uncertainty regarding “Who is speaking?” “On whose behalf is one speaking?” or “And why does s/he need to hide his/her voice behind another’s voice?” (Caffi). In other words, when somebody uses a deictic shield s/he somehow “leaves the field” and disappears and so s/he weakens part of his/her responsibility. These displacement strategies are related to any of the



three basic components of the deictic expressions: the “actantial” (i.e. the source of the utterance act) and the spatio-temporal component. In the first case, we can find examples where the subject has been deleted, or impersonal sentences, or agentless passive sentences or inclusive “we.” For example, when a mother says to her son “we have to eat everything” the mother is including herself in the action and so she is reducing part of her son’s obligation because that obligation becomes a ‘shared’ obligation. In that way, a directive becomes a “mitigated directive.” Therefore, the directive is not something I (as an “actant”) am ordering you to do, it is something we both have to do. So, the mother, instead of saying something like “I’m ordering you to eat everything,” she says “we have to eat everything.” According to Haverkate (517) the use of this inclusive first-person plural pronoun “is a strategical device employed by speakers who aim to avoid making the impression of imposing their point of view upon their interlocutors [...] the hearer shares the responsibility for the statement effect.” Haverkate calls this type of first-person plural reference “pseudo-inclusive” and its perlocutionary effect is to de-emphasize the role of the speaker by involving the hearer in the action. Haverkate distinguishes between the “*pluralis modestiae*” and the “*pluralis sociativus*.” The difference is that the first type of pseudo-inclusive “we” takes place in assertive utterances and the second in directives. The first one serves to protect the speaker’s positive face (Brown and Levinson) and the second reflects the intention of the speaker to create a symbolic form of in-group solidarity. The “*pluralis sociativus*” is normally involved in asymmetrical relations such as those holding between parents and children, teachers and students or doctors and patients. Haverkate (519) explains that this pseudo-inclusive reference is associated with three types of mitigating strategies:

- I. It expresses modesty on the part of the speaker.
- II. It reflects a form of in-group solidarity by suggesting that the hearer shares the point of view put forward by the speaker.
- III. It implies the speaker’s symbolic solidarity with the hearer in directive types of interaction where the former has a superior position with respect to the latter.

In rhetoric, when we substitute the first person pronoun with other personal pronouns that is called “enallage of persons” (Caffi; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca). But in psychology, the closest category to shields are the so-called avoidance strategies (Lewin). Hamilton and Mineo (3) define equivocation as “the intentional use of imprecise language.” Bavelas, Black, Chovil and Mullett (28) observe that “equivocation is non-straightforward communication; it appears ambiguous, contradictory, tangential, obscure or even evasive.” These authors also claim that:

although an individual equivocates, he or she is not the cause of equivocation. Rather, equivocation is the result of the individual’s communicative situation. Equivocation is avoidance; it is the response chosen when all other communicative choices in the situation would lead to negative consequences. (Bavelas *et al.* 54)



In other words, people tend to equivocate because they find themselves immersed in what Bavelas *et al.* term an avoidance-avoidance conflict (referred to by Bull as a communicative conflict), in which they are confronted with a question to which all the possible replies may have negative consequences, but where, nevertheless, a reply is expected.

Bavelas *et al.* use Haley's model as a means of measuring equivocation. According to this principle, a message should contain four basic elements of interpersonal communication: I (sender) am saying this (content) to you (receiver) in this situation (context). Bavelas *et al.* (33) explained these elements as follows:

- (1) Sender: To what extent is the message the speaker's own opinion?
- (2) Content: How clear is the message in terms of what is being said?
- (3) Receiver: To what extent is the message addressed to the other person?
- (4) Context: To what extent is this a direct answer to the question?

Equivocation is assumed to occur when one or more of these elements is/are incongruent or their meaning is obscured.

3. PRONOMINAL SELECTION

According to Karapetjana (43) "the way politicians speak and present themselves is a part of their personality and a way to show themselves as individuals, and so are pronominal choices." The use of personal pronouns is a key topic in linguistics and psychology in general and in political discourse in particular. For this reason, many scholars have carried out very interesting studies on this topic (Bello; Bramley; Brown and Gilman; de Fina; Fetzer; Fetzer and Bull; Goddard; Íñigo-Mora; Moberg and Göran; Pennebaker; Petersoo; Proctor and Wen-Su; and Steffens and Haslam).

There are two main characteristics which define pronouns: (1) they are always political in the sense that they always imply relations of power; and (2) they are always involved in struggles over representation (Pennycook 175). This is the reason why they represent one of the main rhetorical tools used by politicians. As Wilson and Zupnick explain, pronouns are far from being categorical, their use depends on their context of production and, obviously, the speaker's intentions. The scope of reference of pronouns can vary depending on the speaker's purpose, and this turns out to be one of the major tools of persuasion used by politicians. Zupnick (340) declares that the fact that there are several potential referents for the indexicals: "works to the advantage of political speakers as hearers may choose to include themselves as members of the class of referents, potentially bringing about an adoption or at least cognizance of the speaker's perspective."

According to Wilson (76):

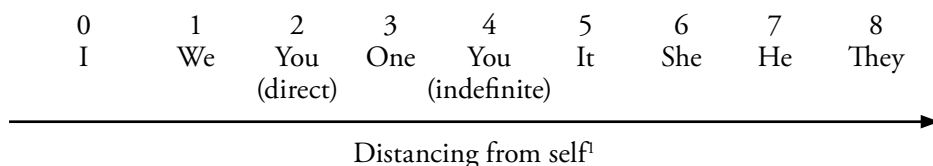
With such manipulative possibilities provided by the pronominal system as it operates in context, it is not surprising to find that politicians make use of pronouns



to good effect: to indicate, accept, deny or distance themselves from responsibility for political action; to reveal ideological bias; to encourage solidarity; to designate and identify those who are supporters (with us) as well as those who are enemies (against us); and to present specific idiosyncratic aspects of the individual politician's own personality.

For these reasons, we can affirm that there is a close connection between the use of personal pronouns and discursive strategies. Politicians use the pronoun system to indicate their solidarity-inclusion within and, at the same time, their opposition-exclusion from specific ideological groups or political parties. This idea has also been expressed by Maitland and Wilson (1987), they explain that “differing political parties make use of the same system to express not only their own ideological views, but also their opposition to the ideological views of those others they may disagree with.” (Maitland and Wilson 495).

Unlike nouns, personal, possessive, and reflexive pronouns have distinctions of person. Taking into account the different meanings of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person pronouns, Rees developed a general scale of pronominal distancing which represented the relationship between distancing strategies and the pronoun system:



As Maitland and Wilson (504-5) argue, this scale has no normative value. They also argue that:

it is useful for representing idiosyncratic variation in pronominal variation. We would predict, for example, that individuals who construe the world in similar ways, that is, have the same ideology and belief system, would exhibit similar patterns of pronominal choice.

These authors analysed the speeches of three different political leaders (M. Thatcher², Kinnock³ and M. Foot⁴) and discovered important similarities between Kinnock and Foot and differences between Kinnock/Foot and Thatcher.

According to Fortanet (51), “In the negotiation of meaning that is always present between the person issuing a message and the person receiving the message one of the key elements is the reference of the personal pronouns.” And this

¹ 0 and 8 represent any selectional choice closest and furthest from the self.
² Conservative Party leader.
³ Labour Party leader.
⁴ Labour Party leader.



strategic use of the pronoun system is specially interesting in the case of the first and second person pronouns because of their implications for both participants in the speech event.

Two of the main uses of the personal pronoun “we” are the exclusive “we” and the inclusive “we.” Whereas the first one excludes the hearer (so “we” = “I” + my group), the second includes it (so “we” = “I” + “you”). Exclusive “we” represents a way of distancing, both from the hearer and from what the speaker is saying and it is normally associated with power. Because of this dichotomy, Pennycook (175) describes this pronoun as a pronoun of “solidarity and rejection” and “communality and authority” (ibid.: 176).

Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik (350-1) distinguish up to eight different uses of “we.” These are:

- (a) Generic: it is an “enlarged” inclusive “we” which may include the whole human race.
- (b) Inclusive authorial: it is used in serious writing and seeks to involve the reader in a joint enterprise.
- (c) Editorial: it is used by a single individual in scientific writing in order to avoid an egoistical “I.”
- (d) Rhetorical: it is used in the collective sense of “the nation,” “the party.” It may be viewed as a special type of generic “we.”
- (e) To refer to the hearer (= you): it is normally used by doctors when talking to a patient and by teachers when giving instructions to students. It is an inclusive “we” used to sound condescending in the case of doctors and non-authoritative in the case of teachers.
- (f) To refer to a third person (= s/he): For example one secretary might say to another with reference to their boss: “We’re in a bad mood today.”
- (g) Royal: it is virtually obsolete and is used by a monarch.
- (h) Nonstandard: plural “us” used for the singular “me”: “lend us a fiver.”

But as Bello (85) explains:

Choices of pronouns, for instance, do not merely pertain to deictic or anaphoric grammatical reference but to references that may relate to identities, group solidarity and the like with the sole aim of indirectly promoting and sustaining power.

For this reason, a contrastive study will prove very interesting in determining possible differences and/or similarities in the way two head representatives of two different countries strategically use this personal pronoun.



4. METHOD

The texts selected for analysis comprise two different debates which took place at the House of Commons (British Parliament) and the *Congreso de los Diputados* (Spanish Parliament) respectively. Both of them are delivered by the highest representative of the government, in the first case the British Ex-Prime Minister David Cameron and in the second case the president of the Spanish government Mariano Rajoy. Both of them deal, among other subjects, with the European Council. Both of them took place in similar dates: 1st September (British Parliament) and 9th July (*Congreso de los Diputados*) 2014. And the length of both of them is very similar: 13'29" (2,237 words) and 18' (2,585 words) respectively.

In the case of the British corpus, the text is an oral statement delivered by Mr. Cameron in the House of Commons on the EU Council, security and the Middle East. At the meeting of EU leaders on 30 August, a new President of the European Council and a new EU High Representative were appointed. EU leaders also discussed the economy and the situation in Ukraine, Gaza and Iraq. On Friday 29 August, the Government announced that the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre has changed the UK's threat level from international terrorism from substantial to severe, in response to developments in Iraq and Syria.

Oral statements are made after Question Time (or at 11am on a Friday) and after any Urgent Questions. Statements normally relate to matters of policy or government actions. At the end of a statement, MPs can respond or question the government minister on its contents. In this case, Mr. Edward Miliband (Labour Leader), responded to the statement on behalf of the Opposition.

As regards the Spanish corpus, it is an initiative in which there is a plenary appearance of the Government in order to inform about the European Council that took place on 26th and 27th June 2014. Members of the Cabinet, at their own request or by a resolution of the Bureau of Congress and the Board of Spokesmen, shall appear before the full House or any of the committees to report on a given matter, in this case the European Council. Following the oral explanation by the Government, the representatives of each parliamentary group may speak for ten minutes to make their positions known, put questions or make remarks, which shall be answered by the Government, without subsequent voting. In exceptional cases, the Speaker may, in agreement with the Bureau and after having consulted the Board of Spokesmen, allocate time for Members to put succinct questions or request clarifications on the information furnished. To this end, the Speaker shall fix a maximum number or duration of speeches.

As it was previously mentioned, the personal pronoun that will be analysed is the first personal plural pronoun "we." First of all, we looked for all the forms ("we," "our," "us" or "nosotros," "nuestro" or just the Spanish verbal inflection form for the second person plural pronoun) and distributed them according to the scope of reference of the pronoun; that is, if it was exclusive, inclusive or any other possibility. We arrived at the following classification:



TABLE 1. SCOPES OF REFERENCE OF FIRST PERSON PLURAL PRONOUN “WE”

Scope of reference	
Inclusive	The Head of the Government + the House
Exclusive	The Head of the Government + the Government
	The Head of the Government + the EU Council
Generic	All British or Spanish citizens

We finally arrived at four different possibilities which were coded in the following way:

- The Head of the Government + the House (1)
- The Head of the Government + the Government (2)
- The Head of the Government + the EU Council (3)
- All British or Spanish citizens (4)

In this way, codes (2) and (3) were two different types of exclusive reference and codes (1) and (4) two different types of inclusive reference.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In tables 1 and 2 we can see all the results we obtained after having analysed both the English and the Spanish corpora:

TABLE 2. FIRST PERSON PLURAL PRONOUNS IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT

First Person Plural Pronouns			
Exclusives	Inclusive (1)	43	50.59% of 85
	+ the Government (2)	20	23.53% of 85
	+ the EU Council (3)	2	2.35% of 85
	Generic (4)	20	23.53% of 85
TOTAL		85	3.78% OF 2,237 WORDS

TABLE 3. FIRST PERSON PLURAL PRONOUNS IN THE SPANISH PARLIAMENT

First Person Plural Pronouns			
Exclusives	Inclusive (1)	10	21.7% of 46
	+ the Government (2)	4	8.7% of 46
	+ the EU Council (3)	27	58.7% of 46
	Generic (4)	5	10.9% of 46
Total		46	1.78% of 2,585 words



The results show completely different behaviours, that is, different scenarios, different performances. The first result that calls our attention is the number of first person plural pronouns. Whereas we found 85 (3.78% of 2,237 words) in the English corpus, we only found 46 (1.78% of 2,585 words) in the Spanish one.

Moreover, if we group together all first person plural pronouns with any type of inclusive reference (i.e. codes 1 and 4) we obtained a total of 15 (32.6% of 46) in the case of the Spanish data and 63 (74.1% of 85) in the case of the English one. In contrast, if we add codes (2) and (3) together (i.e. all exclusive references) we obtained a total of 31 (67.4% of 46) in the Spanish corpus and 22 (25.9% of 85) in the English one. This means that whereas Mr. Rajoy favours exclusiveness Mr. Cameron favours inclusiveness. For instance, when Mr. Cameron is talking about the growing threat of ISIL in Iraq and Syria (one of the topics dealt with in the EU Council) he says:

But I have said all along that there should not be a knee-jerk reaction or the introduction of sweeping new blanket powers that would ultimately be ineffective. That is not what those who work so hard to keep us safe actually want. They want a targeted approach that reflects a forensic focus on the threat we face and that protects their operational independence and decision making. To achieve this, there are two key areas where we need to strengthen our powers to fill specific gaps in our armoury: preventing suspects from travelling; and dealing decisively with those already here who pose a risk. I want to mention both briefly.

In this extract, Mr. Cameron uses five inclusive first person plural forms of “we” when talking about something so delicate as the safety and armoury of the UK. He does not say that he, as head of the government, is going to strengthen the powers of the UK. Instead of that, he shares that responsibility and says “we need to strengthen our powers.” He is avoiding the direct assumption of responsibility of the utterance. As it has been previously stated, the “actant,” in this case Mr. Cameron, defines the relationship as one where the speaker is not in control. He “leaves the field” weakening part of his responsibility. Additionally, he avoids making the impression of imposing his point of view upon his citizens.

In contrast, in the following extract Mr. Rajoy uses three exclusive forms of the pronoun “we” when talking about the EU Council’s decisions:

Aunque nuestros países están saliendo de la crisis económica más profunda en una generación y los esfuerzos y las reformas están dando resultados, seguimos afrontando importantes retos: crecimiento lento, alto desempleo, inversión insuficiente, desequilibrios económicos, un alto nivel de deuda pública y la necesidad de incrementar la competitividad global. Todas nuestras economías necesitan seguir aplicando reformas estructurales. Les anuncio que seguiremos haciéndolo, pero también quiero destacar la necesidad de aprovechar al máximo la flexibilidad contenida en las normas del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento para impulsar la actividad económica, aumentar la inversión y crear más empleo y de mejor calidad.



*Even though **our** countries are leaving behind the most serious economic crisis in one generation and the efforts and the reforms are bringing out results, we are still facing important challenges: slow growth, a high level of public debt and the need to increase the global competitiveness. All **our** economies need to carry out structural reforms. I tell you that **we** will go on doing it, but I also want to highlight the need to make the most of the flexibility included in the norms of the Deal for the Stability and the Growth in order to launch the economic activity, to increase the investment and to create more employment and of a better quality.*

When Mr. Rajoy says “our countries,” “our economies” and “we will go on,” he is talking about all the countries and/or all the representatives of the countries in the EU. In contrast to Cameron’s speech, Mr. Rajoy’s focuses on an exclusive “we” that excludes the listener from the scope of reference. The scope of this “we” embraces all the countries of the EU and what Mr. Rajoy wants to transmit is that Spain is not alone in taking decisions and that these decisions are not his own decision but rather the decisions of all the representatives of the EU. There is something even more important than this, what Mr. Rajoy really wants to do is to make us see that all these problems are not Spain’s problems but rather the EU’s problems. Therefore, in a way, we can also say that he is sharing the responsibility of the actions but in a different way. The shield that Mr. Rajoy is using is the shield of the EU rather than the shield of including the listener in the scope of reference of the personal pronoun. So, Mr. Rajoy prefers to mitigate the action going outwards (EU) and Mr. Cameron going inwards (The House of Commons and the British citizens). Both of them are trying to mitigate the action defocalizing the actor of the action, but they go in different directions.

Another interesting issue has to do with the number of generic first person plural pronouns. In the case of the Spanish corpus, we only found 5 (10.9% of 46) and in the case of the English corpus we found a total of 20 (23.53% of 85). But it is even more curious to note that in the case of Mr. Rajoy, even though he is using a generic first person plural pronoun, he is always relating it to the EU. For example:

- ... no **podemos** sino congratularnos por el hecho de que esta primera prioridad señalada por el Consejo coincide con la de España ... (*... **we** cannot but congratulate **ourselves** for the fact that this first priority pointed out by the Council coincides with Spain’s priority...*)
- ... una Unión Europea capaz de defender **nuestros** valores y **nuestros** intereses. (*... an European Union which is able to defend **our** values and **our** interests ...*)
- ... será bueno no sólo para **nuestro** país sino para el conjunto de los ciudadanos de la Unión Europea. (*... it will be good not only for **our** country but also for the all the citizens of the European Union.*)

In contrast, whenever Mr. Cameron uses a generic first person plural pronoun, he is always highlighting British “freedom of action” and individualism, in other words he is “looking inwards”:



- ... on the measures we are taking to defeat extremism and keep **our** country safe.
- I am deeply concerned by growing reports of anti-Semitism on **our** streets in Britain. Let me be clear: we must not tolerate this in **our** country.
- Britain will continue to consider what further role is in **our** national interests...

In fact, it is really interesting the radical different ways in which Mr. Cameron and Mr. Rajoy conclude their speeches. Mr. Rajoy ends his elocution in the following way:

Señoras y señores diputados, Europa sigue avanzando aunque a veces lo haga con menos intensidad de la que muchos querríamos; en cualquier caso, debemos conseguir otro salto adelante en su proceso de integración y cohesión. Los acuerdos que adoptamos en la pasada Cumbre de los días 26 y 27 de junio fijan un rumbo y unas prioridades, tanto para las instituciones europeas como para cada uno de los Estados miembros. España ha participado de manera activa con sus propuestas, que se han visto reflejadas en el texto final de las conclusiones. Europa tiene ahora una hoja de ruta para los próximos cinco años y España seguirá muy de cerca su cumplimiento, porque estamos plenamente convencidos de que eso será bueno no solo para nuestro país sino para el conjunto de los ciudadanos de la Unión Europea.

*Ladies and gentlemen, Europe goes on making progress although, sometimes, it does so with less intensity than many of **us** would wish; anyway, **we** should get another jump ahead in this process of integrity and cohesion. The agreements **we** reached in the last Summit June 26 and 27 fix one direction and some priorities, both for the European institutions and for each of the State members. Spain has participated in an active way with the proposals which have been included in the final text of the conclusions. Europe has now a roadmap for the next five years and Spain will follow closely its fulfilment, because **we** are absolutely convinced that it will be good not only for **our** country but also for all European citizens.*

As we can see here the final words of Mr. Rajoy's speech are for Europe and for Spain's role in Europe. In this text, Mr. Rajoy uses three inclusive "we": "than many of us would wish," "we should" and "our country." But then he uses two exclusive "we": "we reached" and "we absolutely." Additionally, he also uses an agentless passive in the sentence "which have been included." Furthermore, in four instances the subjects are not "I" or "we" but "Europe" (twice) and "Spain" (twice). All this indicates that there is a tendency to mitigate the actions described in this speech. As we can see, the actant is displaced and Europe and the EU council occupies his place in most of the time. Finally, the very last four words of his speech are: "for all European citizens."

In contrast, Mr. Cameron concludes his speech in the following way:

We are proud to be an open, free and tolerant nation, but that tolerance must never be confused with a passive acceptance of cultures living separate lives or of people behaving in ways that run completely counter to **our** values. Adhering to British values is not an option or a choice; it is a duty for all those who live in these islands. So **we** will stand up for **our** values; **we** will, in the end, defeat this



extremism; and **we** will secure **our** way of life for generations to come. I commend this statement to the House.

As we can see here, Mr. Cameron uses up to six different first person plural referential expressions and absolutely all of them are examples of inclusive generic “we.” In this extract, Mr. Cameron is appealing to British values and British culture. So, he is sharing the responsibility of his actions with the rest of British citizens and it is assumed that all he does is for the sake of his country’s well-being. Again, there is a defocalization of the source of the utterance but this time with an “inward” projection towards British citizens. Finally, in contrast to Mr. Rajoy’s speech, his very last three words are “to the House,” again, a projection towards British Parliament.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In the case of the English corpus, we could see that the most common shield that Mr. Cameron is using in order to weaken the operations taking place is an inclusive “we” in which he shares the responsibility of the action with the listener. In contrast, in the case of the Spanish corpus, Mr. Rajoy prefers to use an exclusive “we” in which he also displaces the source of the utterance but instead of sharing this responsibility with the listener he chooses to split this responsibility with the EU.

We could say that in both cases there is a dislocation of the action but they go in different directions depending on the nationality of the head of the government. In the case of the British Ex-Prime Minister the dislocation is going inwards (House of Commons and British citizens) and in the case of the Spanish President is going outwards (EU). The reasons for these two different behaviours could be due to either personal differences (different people, different rhetorical strategies) or cultural differences (different cultures, different styles or different topics). The corpus analysed in this study is very reduced and we cannot arrive at absolute conclusions but perhaps the “inland” character of the British culture and the Spanish permanent wish for being “part of Europe” can be key factors which could explain the differences encountered in this study. Nevertheless, this is something that should be better proved in further research.

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APPENDIX

BRITISH CORPUS

The Prime Minister (Mr. David Cameron): With permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a statement on this weekend's European Council, and on the measures we are taking to defeat extremism and keep our country safe.

First, on the Council, we agreed that Poland's Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, should serve as the next Council President, and Italian Foreign Minister, Federica Mogherini, should become the next High Representative for foreign and security policy. Donald Tusk made clear in his acceptance speech that he places a high priority on addressing Britain's concerns over the EU, and I look forward to working with him in his new role.

The Council spent most of its time focusing on the big international issues that have concerned us all this summer—the situations in Ukraine, Gaza, and the growing threat of ISIL in Iraq and Syria. I want to discuss each.

The presence of Russian soldiers on Ukrainian soil is completely unjustified and unacceptable. I met President Poroshenko before the Council on Saturday, and with our support he was invited to address the Council. The real cause of this conflict is Russia's refusal to recognise Ukraine's independence and sovereignty. Decisions on Ukraine's political and economic relationships should be for the people of Ukraine and no one else, but Russia appears to be trying to force Ukraine to abandon its democratic choices at the barrel of a gun. In the last two weeks we have seen a dramatic stepping up of Russian military support to the separatists in eastern Ukraine, including Russian troops fighting on the ground. We know from European history the grave danger of a nation state being threatened and undermined in that way, so the European Council agreed that the economic costs it has already imposed on Russia must be stepped up if Moscow persists with those indefensible actions.

The Council was clear that new sanctions measures will be drawn up within a week. I do not accept the suggestion that sanctions are not having an impact. Capital has flown out of Russia, banks are short of finance, and the Russian stock market and rouble have fallen significantly. We have to show real resilience and resolve. Russia needs to understand that if it continues on the current path, its relationship with the rest of the world will be radically different in the future.

On Israel and Gaza, we have all been deeply saddened by the violence there and the dreadful civilian suffering it has caused, particularly to innocent children. The Government have worked hard with our international partners to help bring about a sustainable ceasefire, and we warmly welcome the agreement reached in Cairo. The loss of life this summer has been truly appalling and the number of civilian casualties completely unacceptable—the life of a Palestinian child is worth the same as that of a child of any one of our nations—but support for a lasting settlement that includes a Palestinian state does not mean we should ever support the terrorist tactics of Hamas, which has rained down rockets on Israel and continually refused to accept ceasefires.

We will continue to support Israel and Israel's right to defend itself, but that does not mean we support every decision the Israeli Government take. Most recently, the appropriation of nearly 1,000 acres of land in the west bank near Bethlehem is utterly deplor-



able. Settlements are illegal under international law and will do nothing to create the kind of peace process we all want, and we urge the Israeli Government to reverse this decision.

While I understand the many strong emotions around this tragic conflict, I am deeply concerned by growing reports of anti-Semitism on our streets in Britain. Let me be clear: we must not tolerate this in our country. There can never be any excuse for anti-Semitism, and no disagreements on politics or policy should ever be allowed to justify racism, prejudice or extremism in any form.

On the terrorist threat that we face in the UK, we have all been shocked and sickened by the barbarism that has been witnessed in Iraq this summer: the widespread slaughter of Muslims by fellow Muslims; the vicious persecution of religious minorities, such as Christians and Yazidis; the enslavement and raping of women; and, of course, the beheading of American journalist James Foley, with the voice of what seems to be a British terrorist recorded on that video.

The European Council conclusions could not be clearer:

“The European Council believes that the creation of an Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria and the Islamist-extremist export of terrorism on which it is based, is a direct threat to”

every European country. On Friday, the independent joint terrorism analysis centre increased the threat level in the UK from substantial to severe, and we now believe that at least 500 people have travelled from Britain to fight in the region, in addition to 700 from France, 400 from Germany and hundreds more from countries including America, Canada, Austria, Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands and Australia.

The Council agreed to co-ordinate action in cracking down on those travelling to fight in Syria and Iraq and ensuring that all European countries are taking the necessary steps to tackle this problem of radicalisation. We should be clear about the root cause of this threat: a poisonous ideology of Islamist extremism that believes in using the most brutal forms of terrorism to force people to accept a warped world view and to live in a mediaeval state. And we should be clear that this has nothing to do with Islam, which is a religion observed peacefully and devoutly by more than a billion people and one that inspires countless acts of kindness every day.

To confront the threat of Islamist extremism, we need a tough, intelligent, patient and comprehensive approach to defeat the terrorist threat at source. We must use all the resources at our disposal —our aid, diplomacy and military— and we need a firm security response, whether that means military action to go after the terrorists, international co-operation on intelligence or uncompromising action against terrorists at home. Britain is already providing equipment directly to the Kurdish forces. We support US military air strikes against ISIL in Iraq, and we have secured a United Nations Security Council resolution to disrupt the flows of finance to ISIL, to sanction those seeking to recruit to ISIL and to encourage countries to do all they can to prevent foreign fighters from joining the extremist cause.

Alongside a tough security response, however, there must also be the right political response. We know that terrorist organisations thrive where there is political instability and weak or dysfunctional institutions, so we must support the building blocks of free and



open societies. In Syria, that means a political transition and an end to Assad's brutality, which has allowed ISIL to flourish. In Iraq, that must begin with a new and genuinely inclusive Government capable of uniting all Iraqis —Sunni, Shi'a, Kurd, Christian and others— against the shared threat.

The NATO summit in Wales this week will provide an opportunity for us to review the effectiveness of the international response so far and to discuss what more we should do to help the region overcome the ISIL threat. Britain will continue to consider what further role is in our national interests, including any further diplomatic, humanitarian or, indeed, military measures we might take.

Let me turn to how we address the terrorist threat at home. We have already taken a wide range of measures, including stopping suspects from travelling to the region by seizing passports, barring foreign nationals from re-entering the United Kingdom, legislating so that we can prosecute people for all terrorist activity, even where that activity takes place overseas, and bringing forward emergency legislation, for instance to safeguard our use of communications data. We have also stepped up our operational response, with a fivefold increase in Syria —related arrests and the removal of 28,000 pieces of extremist material from the internet this year alone, including 46 ISIL— related videos.

But I have said all along that there should not be a knee-jerk reaction or the introduction of sweeping new blanket powers that would ultimately be ineffective. That is not what those who work so hard to keep us safe actually want. They want a targeted approach that reflects a forensic focus on the threat we face and that protects their operational independence and decision making. To achieve this, there are two key areas where we need to strengthen our powers to fill specific gaps in our armoury: preventing suspects from travelling; and dealing decisively with those already here who pose a risk. I want to mention both briefly.

First, on stopping people travelling in the first place, passports are not an automatic right. The Home Secretary already has the discretion to issue, revoke and refuse passports under the royal prerogative if there is reason to believe that people are planning to take part in terrorist-related activity. When police suspect a traveller at the border, however, they are not currently able to apply for the royal prerogative and so have only limited stop-and-search powers. To fill that gap, we will introduce specific and targeted legislation providing the police with a temporary power to seize a passport at the border, during which time they will be able to investigate the individual concerned. This power will include appropriate safeguards and, of course, oversight arrangements.

The House should also be aware that our current royal prerogative powers are being challenged in the courts. I want to be clear: if there is any judgment that threatens the operation of our existing powers, we will introduce primary legislation immediately so that Parliament, not the courts, can determine whether it is right that we have this power. I can announce today that we will start preparing the primary legislation and consult Parliament on the draft clauses.

As well as stopping people going, we must also keep out foreign fighters who would pose a threat to the UK. We already have important powers to block return: we can deprive dual nationals of their citizenship to stop them returning; we can bar foreign nationals on the basis of the threat they pose; and we legislated, in the Immigration Act 2014, to allow stronger powers to strip citizenship from naturalised Britons. But, of course, these powers



do not apply to those who are solely British nationals, who could be rendered stateless if deprived of citizenship.

Some have said that we should deal with this gap by criminalising travel to certain individual countries or fundamentally changing our criminal burden of proof. The Government are clear that it would be wrong to deal with the gap by fundamentally changing core principles of our criminal justice system. But it is abhorrent that people who declare their allegiance elsewhere can return to the United Kingdom and pose a threat to our national security. We are clear in principle that what we need is a targeted, discretionary power to allow us to exclude British nationals from the UK. We will work up proposals on this basis with our agencies, in line with our international obligations, and discuss the details on a cross-party basis. We are also putting our long-standing arrangements on aviation security around the world on a statutory footing. Airlines will have to comply with our no-fly list arrangements, give us information on passenger lists and comply with our security screening requirements. If they do not do so, their flights will not be able to land in Britain.

Secondly, we need stronger powers to manage the risk posed by suspected extremists who are already in the United Kingdom. The Home Secretary can already impose terrorism prevention and investigation measures on security grounds, including overnight residence requirements and internet restrictions, but the intelligence agencies and the police believe they need stronger powers to impose further restrictions, and the independent reviewer of counter-terrorism legislation, David Anderson, agrees. So we will introduce new powers to add to our existing terrorism prevention and investigation measures, including stronger locational constraints on suspects under TPIMs, either through enhanced use of exclusion zones or through relocation powers.

Dealing with the terrorist threat is about not just new powers but how we combat extremism in all its forms. That is why we have a new approach to tackling radicalisation, focusing on all types of extremism, not just violent extremism. This has included stopping the funding of organisations that promote extremism, banning hate preachers and ensuring that every part of government, from schools and universities to prisons, is focused on beating the scourge of extremism. As part of this, we are now putting our de-radicalisation programme, Channel, on a statutory footing. Anyone subject to our strengthened terrorism prevention and investigation measures will be required to engage with the Prevent programme.

We are proud to be an open, free and tolerant nation, but that tolerance must never be confused with a passive acceptance of cultures living separate lives or of people behaving in ways that run completely counter to our values. Adhering to British values is not an option or a choice; it is a duty for all those who live in these islands. So we will stand up for our values; we will, in the end, defeat this extremism; and we will secure our way of life for generations to come. I commend this statement to the House.

SPANISH CORPUS

Comparecencia del presidente del Gobierno ante el Pleno del Congreso de los Diputados para informar sobre el Consejo Europeo celebrado los días 26 y 27 de junio de 2014. Tiene la palabra el señor presidente del Gobierno.



El señor PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO (Rajoy Brey): Señor presidente, señoras y señores diputados, comparezco ante la Cámara para informar sobre la Cumbre de jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de la Unión Europea celebrada en Bruselas los pasados días 26 y 27 de junio. Uno de los asuntos allí tratados ha merecido especial atención, la decisión de proponer al Parlamento Europeo a Jean-Claude Juncker como candidato a la Presidencia de la Comisión Europea. Se trata de una decisión que compete al Consejo y que reviste un gran calado político. Los tratados por los que nos regimos en la Unión Europea atribuyen a la Comisión competencias muy importantes, especialmente el derecho de iniciativa legislativa o la ejecución de los acuerdos de las distintas instituciones; pero la trascendencia política de esta decisión no solo se circunscribe a la importancia de los asuntos que llevará adelante el presidente de la Comisión, ya que por primera vez se ha sometido al debate y la aprobación del Consejo un nuevo método de elección de la persona que ha de presidir la Comisión durante los próximos cinco años. En su origen los tratados preveían que tal designación debía llevarse a cabo por unanimidad. Piensen, señorías, las dificultades que eso acarrearía hoy en una Unión con veintiocho Estados miembros. Posteriormente, en 2011, el Tratado de Niza eliminó la unanimidad e introdujo la aprobación por mayoría cualificada. Por último, el Tratado de Lisboa, que entró en vigor el 1 de diciembre de 2009, incorporó en su artículo 17.7 dos requisitos más: por un lado, tener en cuenta el resultado de las elecciones europeas a la hora de dicha designación y, por otro, mantener las consultas apropiadas entre las distintas instituciones.

Durante la campaña para las pasadas elecciones europeas cada uno de los cinco principales partidos políticos europeos presentó un candidato propio a presidir la Comisión Europea. A la vista del resultado de las elecciones y dado que el Partido Popular Europeo fue la fuerza más votada y la que obtuvo más diputados en la Cámara de Estrasburgo, la Conferencia de Presidentes de los grupos políticos del Parlamento Europeo, celebrada el pasado 27 de mayo, acordó que el candidato del grupo más votado sería el primero en intentar formar la mayoría requerida. Este hecho fue recalcado durante el pasado Consejo Europeo por el presidente en ejercicio del Parlamento, el señor Pittella, cuando afirmó —cito textualmente—: Los presidentes de los cinco grupos políticos que representan más de quinientos diputados invitan al Consejo Europeo a respetar la letra y el espíritu de los tratados y, visto el resultado de las elecciones europeas, dar a Jean-Claude Juncker, cabeza de lista del partido más votado, el mandato para constituir una mayoría en el Parlamento Europeo. El pasado 27 de mayo, dos días después de las elecciones, los jefes de Estado y de Gobierno celebramos una cena informal en Bruselas y mandamos al presidente Van Rompuy para que iniciara las consultas oportunas. Tras haberse dirigido al Parlamento Europeo y haber consultado a los veintiocho miembros del Consejo, el presidente Van Rompuy constató que una gran mayoría respaldaba al mismo candidato que apoyaban la mayoría de los grupos políticos del Parlamento Europeo, es decir, a Jean-Claude Juncker. Este hecho quedó de manifiesto en la reunión del Consejo Europeo, de la que hoy estoy informando, cuando solo dos Estados miembros no votaron a favor de Jean-Claude Juncker. Se cumple así una demanda ampliamente extendida entre la ciudadanía europea, que quería una relación más directa entre sus representantes en el Parlamento Europeo y la figura que presidiera la Comisión. Con esta decisión el Consejo ha cumplido con el espíritu y la letra del tratado y además ha introducido un nuevo elemento que, en mi opinión, tiene también una importante carga política junto con la designación del señor Juncker. Aprobó un documento, la



llamada agenda estratégica para la Unión en tiempos de cambio, donde se establecen cinco ejes prioritarios que deberán guiar durante la legislatura que ahora comienza la acción de la Comisión Europea y del resto de las instituciones de la Unión. Esta agenda guiará a dichas instituciones en su programación, tanto anual como plurianual, y en su planificación legislativa. El Consejo Europeo se encargará de supervisar regularmente la aplicación de estas prioridades estratégicas.

Quiero destacar que es la primera vez que un candidato propuesto por el Consejo Europeo para presidir la Comisión recibe un plan de actuación de estas características. Los cinco ejes prioritarios de esta agenda son los siguientes. El primero está dedicado a conseguir una Unión que favorezca el empleo, el crecimiento económico y la competitividad. Como españoles, no podemos sino congratularnos por el hecho de que esta primera prioridad señalada por el Consejo coincida con la de España, el crecimiento económico y la creación de empleo. Aunque nuestros países están saliendo de la crisis económica más profunda en una generación y los esfuerzos y las reformas están dando resultados, seguimos afrontando importantes retos: crecimiento lento, alto desempleo, inversión insuficiente, desequilibrios económicos, un alto nivel de deuda pública y la necesidad de incrementar la competitividad global. Todas nuestras economías necesitan seguir aplicando reformas estructurales. Les anuncio que seguiremos haciéndolo, pero también quiero destacar la necesidad de aprovechar al máximo la flexibilidad contenida en las normas del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento para impulsar la actividad económica, aumentar la inversión y crear más empleo y de mejor calidad. Esta flexibilidad ya le fue aplicada a España a partir de 2012, lo que nos ha permitido compatibilizar el cumplimiento de nuestros compromisos de consolidación fiscal con el mantenimiento de servicios esenciales como la educación, la sanidad, las prestaciones por desempleo, etcétera. La agenda estratégica reconoce también que es fundamental contar con una unión económica y monetaria más sólida y resistente que constituya por sí misma un factor de estabilidad y de crecimiento. Por ello, hemos acordado reforzar la coordinación de las políticas económicas, la convergencia de nuestras economías y la solidaridad. En el documento de conclusiones el Consejo Europeo ha reconocido que, gracias a los esfuerzos de los Estados miembros, la corrección de los desequilibrios macroeconómicos ha progresado y que la situación de las cuentas públicas continúa mejorando.

En este contexto, este semestre europeo finaliza para España ostensiblemente mejor que el anterior. España está en la senda de la recuperación, como reconocen las recomendaciones específicas que para nuestro país ha emitido la Comisión. Esta ya no califica como excesivos los desequilibrios de nuestra economía; constata los progresos realizados por España en el cumplimiento de las recomendaciones del pasado año. Además, las recomendaciones específicas para España están plenamente en línea con nuestro programa nacional de reformas y nuestro programa de estabilidad que, como la propia Comisión reconoce, constituyen una agenda de reformas estructurales que mejoran la competitividad, apoyan la creación de empleo e impulsan el crecimiento. Para terminar con este primer eje de actuaciones, señorías, las prioridades que hemos establecido para los próximos cinco años son: aprovechar el potencial del mercado único en todas sus dimensiones; promover un clima de emprendimiento y abordar las necesidades de inversión; reforzar el atractivo de la Unión como lugar de producción e inversión; hacer de la unión económica y monetaria un factor de estabilidad y crecimiento, con una gobernanza más sólida de la zona euro. Permítanme afirmar en este punto que hoy ya nadie duda de la solidez e irreversibilidad del euro; aquellos



que lo hicieron no valoraron adecuadamente la firme voluntad política que existe detrás de la moneda única, que constituye una parte esencial del proyecto de integración europeo.

El segundo eje de la agenda estratégica está centrado en las personas, en conseguir una Unión capaz de crear las condiciones para la formación adecuada de todos los ciudadanos y en mantener unos sistemas de protección social justos y eficientes. Queremos que Europa sea un espacio de oportunidades, protegiendo la libertad de los trabajadores para moverse libremente, residir y trabajar en cualquier país de la Unión Europea, así como garantizar la equidad, combatiendo la evasión y el fraude fiscales.

El tercer eje de la agenda recoge una Unión de la energía que asegure una energía asequible, segura y sostenible, tanto para los ciudadanos como para las empresas europeas. Los acontecimientos geopolíticos y el impacto del cambio climático nos obligan a replantearnos nuestra estrategia en este terreno. La dependencia energética de Europa es excesiva, por ello España ha insistido en la necesidad de desarrollar aún más las interconexiones. Hemos hecho, junto con Portugal y Polonia, una contribución a este Consejo Europeo; me refiero a los asuntos relacionados con el clima y la energía. Hemos reconocido que nuestras políticas deben centrarse en completar el mercado interior de la energía y que esto exige el desarrollo de las interconexiones. Esta cuestión, la de las interconexiones, ha quedado recogida no solo en la agenda estratégica sino también en las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo. Hemos reafirmado nuestro compromiso para poner fin al aislamiento de cualquier Estado miembro de las redes del gas y electricidad mediante el aumento de la interconexión, y hemos fijado para el próximo Consejo Europeo de octubre la decisión sobre un nuevo objetivo de interconexión para 2030. Como ustedes saben, la Comisión ha propuesto que este objetivo sea del 15%, lo que representa un avance del 50 % sobre el objetivo vigente. Como se puede ver, avanzamos en esta materia, tal y como llevamos defendiendo desde hace mucho tiempo. Señorías, por razones medioambientales, estratégicas, de seguridad y de competitividad económica esta cuestión de la energía es una de las prioridades de nuestro país, y estoy convencido de que cada vez más socios europeos van a compartir con nosotros este planteamiento.

La cuarta prioridad de la agenda estratégica lleva por título Una Unión de libertad, seguridad y justicia. Estas cuestiones también están recogidas ampliamente en el documento de conclusiones. Se trata, como saben, de asuntos en los que nuestro país ha sido desde su incorporación a las Comunidades Europeas en el ya lejano 1986 uno de los más activos en el seno de la Unión. Por ello, en este momento en el que la Unión Europea tiene que preparar las grandes orientaciones del programa post-Estocolmo hemos querido contribuir con unas propuestas que remití en su día a los presidentes del Consejo Europeo y de la Comisión y que se encuentran ampliamente recogidas en el documento que aprobamos en la cumbre que hoy nos ocupa. Permítanme destacar algunas de estas propuestas. En primer lugar, la necesidad de contar en la Unión Europea con una política de inmigración, asilo y fronteras eficiente y bien gestionada; una política que esté guiada por los principios de solidaridad y distribución equitativa de la responsabilidad. En lo que respecta al espacio Schengen hemos reconocido la necesidad de contar con una gestión eficiente de las fronteras exteriores comunes de la Unión. Abogamos para ello por el refuerzo de la existencia operativa de Frontex y asimismo hemos acordado estudiar la creación de un sistema europeo de guardias de frontera. Permítanme destacar de manera muy especial la incorporación a las conclusiones por iniciativa española de la necesidad de reforzar la protección de las víctimas. Con este



reconocimiento europeo quiero poner de relieve una vez más nuestro compromiso con todas aquellas personas que han sufrido las consecuencias del terrorismo o la violencia de género.

Por último, como quinta prioridad en lo referido al ámbito exterior, la agenda propugna una Unión Europea fuerte en el mundo que sea referente de democracia, bienestar y prosperidad; una Unión Europea capaz de defender nuestros valores y nuestros intereses. En este orden de cosas el Gobierno español observa con inquietud una inestabilidad geopolítica creciente, en particular en las fronteras orientales y meridionales de la Unión. Por lo tanto, creemos que es crucial un enérgico compromiso de la Unión Europea en los términos desarrollados en la agenda.

En resumen, señorías, el próximo 15 de julio el Parlamento Europeo someterá a votación la propuesta del Consejo Europeo. Si obtiene una mayoría absoluta de sus miembros, Jean-Claude Juncker se convertirá en el próximo presidente de la Comisión Europea. De ser así, sería una buena noticia porque, como tuve ocasión de afirmar en la rueda de prensa posterior al Consejo Jean-Claude Juncker es una persona de gran experiencia, un europeísta convencido y un gran amigo de España.

Señorías, España tiene que recuperar la confianza de los ciudadanos. Para ello son necesarios certeza y estabilidad institucional capaces de resolver adecuadamente nuestros problemas. Abogo para que el próximo 15 de julio el apoyo a Juncker no se traduzca únicamente en un voto de investidura, sino que las fuerzas políticas que buscan el progreso de Europa sean capaces de acordar también una agenda de legislatura en línea con lo aprobado por el Consejo Europeo. De este modo lanzaríamos un mensaje de seguridad y de confianza a todos nuestros conciudadanos y mostraríamos de forma clara y rotunda que los cambios introducidos en el Tratado de Lisboa han representado un sustancial avance en el acercamiento entre las instituciones y las personas a las que sirven.

Señoras y señores diputados, en otro orden de cosas, en este Consejo Europeo se han firmado los acuerdos de asociación y libre comercio de la Unión Europea con Georgia, Moldavia y Ucrania, que supone un gran paso adelante en el acercamiento de dichos países a la Unión. En relación con la situación de Ucrania, permítanme recordar una vez más la posición de España basada desde el inicio de esta crisis en los siguientes puntos: la necesidad del respeto de la integridad territorial y de la soberanía de Ucrania, el apoyo político y económico a su Gobierno que se ha reiterado en este Consejo Europeo, la solidaridad con nuestros socios y aliados y el diálogo entre las partes como clave para la solución de la crisis. El Consejo Europeo ha expresado claramente su apoyo al Plan de paz anunciado por el presidente Poroshenko. Asimismo, se han reconocido otros pasos en la buena dirección, como son: la aceptación de dicho plan por el presidente Putin y la decisión del Consejo de la Federación Rusa de revocar la autorización para intervenir militarmente en Ucrania. El Consejo Europeo ha subrayado una serie de pasos concretos que deben darse en un futuro próximo. En función de su cumplimiento la Unión Europea reexaminará su posición y tomará las medidas oportunas. También entre los acuerdos adoptados en el Consejo quiero destacar tanto la concesión a Albania del estatus de país candidato a la Unión Europea como la constatación de que Lituania cumple con las condiciones exigidas por los tratados para convertirse en el decimonoveno miembro de la eurozona; un muestra clara de que la crisis del euro forma parte del pasado y de que, como he repetido tantas veces, el euro está aquí para quedarse.



Señoras y señores diputados, Europa sigue avanzando aunque a veces lo haga con menos intensidad de la que muchos querríamos; en cualquier caso, debemos conseguir otro salto adelante en su proceso de integración y cohesión. Los acuerdos que adoptamos en la pasada Cumbre de los días 26 y 27 de junio fijan un rumbo y unas prioridades, tanto para las instituciones europeas como para cada uno de los Estados miembros. España ha participado de manera activa con sus propuestas, que se han visto reflejadas en el texto final de las conclusiones. Europa tiene ahora una hoja de ruta para los próximos cinco años y España seguirá muy de cerca su cumplimiento, porque estamos plenamente convencidos de que eso será bueno no solo para nuestro país sino para el conjunto de los ciudadanos de la Unión Europea.

Muchas gracias. (Aplausos).

