

Beat: Politics

## Guaranteeing equal opportunities is an absolute priority of capital importance

**Mariano Rajoy says**

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**USPA NEWS** - During his speech at the opening ceremony of the 1st International Congress entitled "The Voice of Women in the World", the President of the Spanish Government, Mariano Rajoy announced that the Council of Ministers will soon approve a Rural Women Empowerment Plan.

Mariano Rajoy highlighted the fundamental role played by the women who live in the rural environment, six million in Spain. He said that women contribute to the development of social and economic life in rural surroundings, care for the local environment, ensure the success of farming operations and keep villages alive. Furthermore, he announced that the Council of Ministers will soon approve a Rural Women Empowerment Plan that seven ministerial departments are currently working on. This plan, which is going to develop the provisions of the Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities, will coordinate rural environment equality policies in a comprehensive fashion for the first time in Spain.

It will "foster entrepreneurship, self-employment and the participation of women in the sustainability of the rural environment." It will also promote reconciliation and increase the presence of women in executive positions and on the executive boards of farming cooperatives. The President of the Government stressed that the rural world in Spain does indeed have a future because, besides being the cornerstone of farming life, it is a source of environmental resources that promote other activities, such as leisure, tourism, culture and agro-industrial transformation.

In this regard, Mariano Rajoy said that the Government of Spain "is going to do everything within its power to ensure that the opportunities created there lead to tangible results for everyone." The President of the Government listed some of the measures adopted by his government to "overcome those problems of unequal opportunities" and "foster the employment of women throughout the country."

He specifically mentioned the tax break for the recruitment of women through positive programmes and actions to improve employability and self-employment. He said that women account for 46% of National Insurance contributors. Mariano Rajoy is convinced that this figure can be increased and that it will be possible over the coming years to achieve a 50/50 distribution between men and women.

Mariano Rajoy underlined the government's commitment to achieving real equality between men and women. He explained this is not only "an act of justice, logic and common sense" but that everyone "needs" -men and women- to help generate greater progress and increased well-being. The President of the Government stressed that "men and women are -through diversity- equally valuable and necessary for building a better future" because "a country is made up of all the people" who live there. In his opinion, this is not a problem of legislation but rather "requires a fundamental change of mentality," and added that "we need to progress as a country, with a more balanced, varied and richer outlook; that is the challenge for the future."

The President of the Spanish Government expressed his outright condemnation of the violence suffered by women all over the world "purely and simply for being women." Besides reiterating his "firm and unwavering commitment to the eradication of such violence," he said that putting an end to this violence is a priority for Spain and a matter of State. In this regard, he sent a clear message to those women who may be suffering abuse: "there is a way out and you are not alone."

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