
CONGRESS CONCLUSIONS ON THE SECOND FOUR-YEAR PLAN

The representatives of the Basque Centres in Argentina, Australia Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, Spain, The United States, France, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, The United Kingdom, The Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela, in accordance with Article 13 of Act 8 of the 27th May 1994 on Relations with Basque Communities and Centres outside the Basque Autonomous Community, draw up this document of conclusions of the Second World Congress held at the Presidency headquarters between the 20th and the 29th of October 1999, and present it to the Board for consideration when drafting a four-year plan for the 2000-2003 period.

Its preparation is based upon the provisions of the above-mentioned law and more specifically upon articles 8, 9, 10 and 11 and Titles II and III that refer to provisions for Basque Centres, the rights of the members of Basque communities and assistance to members of Basque communities.

When drawing it up, the papers delivered during this Congress by the Basque Centres and Federations of different countries and the papers and proposals tabled by representatives of the Basque public sector and private sector have all been taken into consideration. At the same time, we have borne in mind that institutional action should be approached from a realistic stance, in accordance with the economic, human and material conditioning factors that will be forthcoming in the next four years, both from the Basque public institutions and the Basque Centres.

Based upon the above, the Congress conclusions are presented as proposals for drawing up the next action plan, with priority being given to the following objectives:

- Plans aimed at youngsters: training and information about the current reality of the Basque Country and job placements in Basque companies
- Welfare programmes for the needy or for those in a desperate situation
- Other social benefit programmes
- Basque culture
- University exchanges
- Economic and tourist programmes

A. Plans aimed at youngsters: training and information about the current reality of the Basque Country and job placements in basque companies

The future of Basque Centres and their relationship with the Basque Country depends, to a large extent, upon the preparation and involvement of our youngsters in the lives of our institutions.

Based upon our conviction that the above is true and in reply to the requests expressly made by the youngsters that have participated in the annual Gaztemundu programmes, the Congress makes the following proposals:

A.1. The Basque Government, through its General Secretariat of Foreign Action shall earmark a percentage of the subsidies for Basque Centres towards the financing of the following programmes: «Gaztemundu», the Basque Language (through an agreement with HABE) and the preparation of materials for teaching Basque traditional dances in collaboration with the Culture Department and the Provincial Governments.

A.2. The General Secretariat of Foreign Action shall let the Basque Centres know, in as short a space of time as possible, the requirements that those aspiring to participate in the Gaztemundu programme will have to fulfil (it was unanimously agreed that no more than one opportunity per year be given).

A.3. The Culture Department's section for Youth and Community Action will look for families in the Basque Country prepared to welcome primarily young Basque dancers and/or youngsters enrolled in Basque language courses from a list prepared by Basque Centres that will also indicate families in their own countries prepared to host youngsters from the Basque Country.

A.4. The Culture Department's section for Youth and Community Action will also co-ordinate youth exchange plans during holiday time between youngsters from families of Basque Centre members and families in the Basque Country. With this in mind, the Basque Centres will send to the Department of Relations with Basque Communities a description of the type of youngster they would like to have to stay and the conditions.

A.5. The Culture Department's section for Youth and Community Action promises to examine all the petitions received from youngsters from Basque Centres wishing to participate in the Young Peoples Work Camp Programme and will specially reserve 25 places on this programme for them under the conditions laid down in the programme, at the same time as exempting these 25 youngsters from paying the registration fee.

A.6. When youngsters from Basque Centres come to the Basque Country, the Culture Department's section for Youth and Community Action will provide them with advice about how to obtain a youth card.

A.7. The Culture Department will use Euskadi Net to provide information about the Basque Autonomous Community's programmes regarding grants, employment, youth hostels, competitions, etc.

A.8. Youngsters from Basque Centres will be able to take part in training courses organised in the Basque Country by the Nevada University's Basque Studies Programme and the University of the Basque Country. The Department of Relations with Basque Communities will co-ordinate the initial steps to be taken by those wishing to participate in these programmes and will put them before the programme's organisers.

A.9. The Department of Industry, Commerce and Tourism will offer advice to youngsters from Basque Centres wishing to carry out business training courses in the Basque Country.

A.10. The General Secretariat of Foreign Action will take the necessary steps to obtain grants so that youngsters from Basque Centres can obtain work experience in Basque Companies.

A.11. The Basque Centres promise to present the General Secretariat of Foreign Action with the Promotion, Training and Activities Programme for youngsters from Basque Centres that is to be implemented during the 2001-2003 period.

A.12. The management boards of the Basque Centres will send the Department of Relations with Basque Communities reports on their dance programme, together with photographs and a plan stating their aims for dance teaching over the next four years so that the Basque Government can prepare a plan for preparing and distributing materials. The Department of Relations with the Basque Communities will send the information it receives in this manner to all the Basque Centres.

A.13. The Basque Centres promise to prepare annual reports on those undergraduates in their last year at university who wish to carry out postgraduate studies in the Basque Country, so that these undergraduates receive the information they need in good time.

B. Welfare programmes for the needy or for those in a desperate situation

B.1. We currently have a data base with information on 17,761 members of Basque Centres. However the type of data held provides no indication of whether members are needy or in a desperate situation. With this in mind, the Basque Centres promise to send the General Secretariat of Foreign Action, within a six-month period, reports with a definition of what is meant by «needy», the type of help that the Basque Centre and Basque Institutions can offer, the methodology to be used to identify needy people, a list of them, how to monitor the assistance provided and how it is to be justified.

B.2. The General Secretariat of Foreign Action will provide the Basque Centres with information on the requirements the needy person would need to meet to be entitled to assistance such as a hardship or emergency allowances.

B.3. The General Secretariat of Foreign Action promises to work with the Labour, Justice and Social Security Department and the Provincial Governments to analyse all applications and also to examine the possibility of setting up a specific programme to attend to the problems of the needy during the year 2001.

B.4. For cases of needy members in a desperate situation, the General Secretariat of Foreign Action will look into the possibility of providing specific assistance through subsidies.

B.5. The Basque Centres will take the necessary steps to ensure that the motion proposed to the Basque Parliament on the 18th of June 1999 by Euzko Abertzaleak, Euskal Herritarrok, Eusko Alkartasuna and Izquierda Unida-Ezker Batua B, especially with regards to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 and approved by the plenary session of the Basque Parliament on the 29th of June 1999, is abided by.

B.6. Along the same lines, the Basque Centres, in accordance with the Basque Parliament's motion and also the motion proposed to the Commission of Overseas Affairs, promise to make the necessary contacts to «create, together with the Institutions of those countries where exiles settled as a result of the Spanish Civil War and especially those in South American nations, an assistance fund to attend to any needs which those exiles may have and thus guarantee them a minimum level of income in accordance with the economic situation of the country where they have settled».

B.7. The Basque Centres promise to carry out studies on the need and feasibility of day-care centres in their institutions so that the Basque Government can make the necessary proposals for assistance in this area.

C. Other social benefit programmes

C.1. If there are members of Basque communities in the Basque Country for programmes organised in conjunction with or even by the Basque Public Institutions, the Basque Government, via its Department of Health, will guarantee health care for any members of the Basque Community residing in the Basque Country, either temporarily or on a permanent basis.

C.2. The doctors that are members of the Basque Centres will be entitled to practice in public hospitals belonging to Osakidetza (the Basque health service) and other institutions belonging to the public health sector. The only requirement needed to take part in this programme is to have the necessary specialisation, as well as to be registered at the Register for Basque Centres as a member of a Basque Centre.

C.3. Basque institutions may wish to finance, if the need is justified and there is enough money available, part of the travel costs of those people who have decided to return to the Basque Country for good and the General Secretariat of Foreign Action will draw up an ad hoc regulation to this end.

C.4. The Department of Justice, Labour and Social Security will provide technical and legal assistance to members of Basque Centres who would like to avail themselves of the right to dual nationality.

C.5. The General Secretariat of Foreign Action, via its Department of Relations with Basque Communities, shall include within the elements which may be subsidised by the Decree of subsidies to Basque Centres, the financing of apex flights and insurance for pensioners wishing to visit their families, provided they abide by the following requirements: they must be over the age of 60, not have been to the Basque Country during the previous three years and provide documents proving that members of their families would be prepared to provide them with a home for a specific period of time.

D. Basque culture

D.1. The Basque Government, through its Publications Department and in co-ordination with other Departments, will send different publications to the Basque Centres.

D.2. In a similar vein, the Culture Department will send publications in Basque to those organisations which have managed to organise Basque language classes.

D.3. For the remaining Basque Centres, the Department of Culture will send as quickly as possible, through HABE, a plan for learning Basque.

D.4. The General Secretariat of Foreign Action, through its Department of Relations with Basque Communities, will inform these communities, within six months, of the most important information sources about Euskadi via Internet. In the same vein the Basque Centres agree to pass this information on to all its members and also to provide an internet access point at the Basque Centre. Subsequently they will send a report on their action to the General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs.

D.5. The Culture Department promises to offer the Basque Centres the following cultural services:

D.5.1. Information, via the internet, about traditional Basque sports, pelota and rowing.

D.5.2. Annual training courses for pelota teachers at the Getxo Training Centre. The Department will cover training and lodging costs. Those who take the course must then pass on this knowledge to the Basque Centre members and even train them if the Basque Centre's managers ask them to do so.

To organise all of this the Basque Centres should send the Department a joint application indicating the number of people willing to participate in such a training course and should then reach an agreement on course dates with the Department.

D.5.3. Starting in the year 2000, the Culture Department will publish on its web-site a catalogue of libraries and archives in the Basque Autonomous Community. It will include 90 public and some private libraries in three different areas: a catalogue of bibliographic heritage, a catalogue of libraries in the Basque Autonomous Community and a Catalogue of National Book Numbers.

D.5.4. Also from the year 2000 onwards it will be possible to look up inventories and catalogues of the Basque Autonomous Community's archaeological heritage. Currently, an inventory is being made of around 40,000 buildings. Each entry in the final inventory will contain information, photos and geographic location.

D.5.5. The Culture Department promises to look into requests made for it to participate in cultural weeks and open courses. Said participation will primarily take the form of providing speakers and videos.

D.5.6. Along similar lines, it will also look into the possibility of promoting tours of Basque theatre groups to countries where there are Basque Centres.

D.5.7. It will also continue putting Basque Centres' dance groups into contact with Basque agents.

D.5.8. During the year 2000, the Culture Department, as part of its overseas cultural programme, will organise a ten-day tour of South America for the Basque Symphony Orchestra.

D.5.9. Within six months the Culture Department and the General Secretariat of Foreign Action will draw up a plan for teaching Basque in the Basque Centres. Priority will be given to those applications for an extension of Basque language teaching programmes already developed in previous years.

D.5.10. Each year, on December 3rd, the Culture Department will hold the International Basque Language Day. In 1999, coinciding with this date, it will organise the 7th International Conference on Minority Languages at the Euskalduna Conference Centre, Bilbao on the 1st, 2nd

and 3rd of December. This event will be co-ordinated by the Deputy Ministry for Language Policy. During the last day of the Conference a cultural show will be organised with music and dance from all the different parts of the Basque Country. A report on the event will be sent to each one of the Basque Centres.

D.5.11. The international channel of Basque Television will have special programmes on the 3rd of December to mark the International Basque Language Day.

D.6. The Basque Centres promise to send information about the events organised to celebrate this day to The Office of Relations with Basque Communities so that it can be passed on to the media.

D.7. The General Secretariat of Foreign Action will publish those pieces of research and personal experiences written about the presence of Basques around the world that are submitted every year to the Andrés de Irujo prize, in accordance with the recommendation to this end made by the committee comprised of members of the Advisory Board for Relations with Basque Communities.

D.8. The Basque Centres promise to look at new ways of projecting overseas public and private organisations within the Basque Country. They will do so by contacting domestic and international public and private organisations so as to achieve their international recognition.

D.9. The Basque Centres also promise to embark upon the task of collecting documents reflecting the history of their centre (minutes of meetings, publications, photos etc.) together with statements from emigrants or Basque exiles. They may even wish to donate them to one of the documentation centres in the Basque Country.

D.10. The Basque Centres promise to contact their local Universities to study the possibility of organising activities to disseminate and/or research the subject of the Basque question. They will let the General Secretariat of Foreign Action know of the results.

D.11. The Basque Centres also promise to make the necessary contacts with their local media with a view to using them for disseminating information about the current reality of the Basque Country.

The General Secretariat of Foreign Action promises to send the Basque Centres an in-depth report on any information received along these lines.

D.12. The Basque Centres will look into the possibility of applying the experience of disseminating Basque cuisine carried out in Mexico, to their own countries. The Office for Relations with Basque Communities will co-ordinate contacts with Basque hotel and catering schools so as to check the feasibility of the projects and to examine offers of employment for Basque chefs that they may receive from them.

D.13. Under the general understanding that culture is any social expression or the aspiration of a people that is jointly responsible with other peoples for the idea of a «global village», the Basque Centres promise to look into and, when necessary, get involved in the creation in each country of an International Association of Friends of Basques, comprised of prestigious personalities from different walks of life, so as to obtain a greater international recognition of Basque cultural values.

D.14. With a view to promoting the image of Basque Centres throughout the world, Basque Television will pay special attention to informing about the most important activities and pieces of news received from Basque Centres.

D.15. For this same reason, the General Secretariat of Foreign Action will carry on publishing the Basque News Bulletin and will create a space for information on Basque Centres in the Basque Government's web page.

D.16. Euskaltzaindia-The Royal Academy for the Basque Language- will provide, in computerised format, information about the language corpus of Basque, i.e. the basic foundations of the Basque General Dictionary, together with the Academy's decisions and recommendations, its library catalogue, a consultation service for questions and queries which Basque speakers may have (called Jagonet) and information about the Academy.

D.17. The Academy would also be prepared to collaborate in organising talks for those Basque Centres interested in subjects such as grammar, names of people and places, lexicography, dialectology, standardisation of the Basque language (past and present) and Basque literature, after the analysis of applications made to the General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs and a commitment to finance the cost of such talks between the Basque Centre applying, the Academy and the Basque Government.

E. University exchanges

E.1. The University of the Basque Country shall send to the Basque Centres and Federations: publications related to its international relations with other universities, programmes that overseas students can sign up for and the requirements that overseas students should fulfil to do so. In addition to this, there will be a programme of grants to encourage students attending universities in countries where there are Basque Centres to come to the University of the Basque Country. What is more, the University of the Basque Country will offer the universities those courses that are available via its «Virtual University» programme.

E.2. The University of the Basque Country will propose to the Basque Centres and their corresponding Federations that an agreement be signed with the Universities of the geographical area where the Basque Centres are located to look into the possibility of creating open «Basque Culture» courses. In addition, the University of the Basque Country will offer these universities the possibility of teaching PhD programmes on their campuses, with those students participating in said programmes being considered as priority students when awarding any pre and post doctoral grants that may be applicable.

E.3. Along these lines, the Presidency of the Basque Government, through the General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs, the Education Department through its Deputy Ministry for Universities and Research, the Department of Culture, through The Deputy Ministry for Language Policy and the University of the Basque Country through its Vice-Chancellorship of Cultural Extension and University Projection and the Faculty of Philology, Geography and History, promise to prepare, within 6 months, a foreign language assistant programme for the 2001-2003 period, to be sent to the Basque Centres and Federations so as to collect together the commitments of the Universities and their surroundings.

E.4. In the case of the «Basque Culture» courses, the University of the Basque Country promises to send to the Universities all those books and documents that it has, that are related to the programme's theme.

E.5. Within six months, the Basque Centres will send to the General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs, information about the main interests of the universities in their area for an exchange of lecturers with the University of the Basque Country.

E.6. The Culture Department, through HABE (The Centre for Adult Literacy in Basque), the General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs and the University of the Basque Country will prepare a series of Basque language courses to be given in Basque Centres by Basque Philology students or trainee teachers, as long as board and lodging for the teachers is provided by those Basque Centres asking for the courses. Travel costs will be covered by the institutions mentioned above and grants may also be provided.

E.7. Deusto University and the General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs will prepare a course on Basque Institutional History for the Internet.

F. Economic and tourist programmes

F.1. The Basque Centres will be taken into account when designing and planning Basque trade and economic missions to countries with an organised Basque community. What is more, all those economic actions presented by Basque Centres aimed at promoting bilateral relationships between the Basque Country and the host nations, will be thoroughly studied.

F.2. All Basques from overseas wishing to set up a company or a business in the Basque Country will have any necessary legal and technical advice provided by the appropriate Basque institutions.

F.3. What is more, the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism will provide advice when searching for Basque partners to develop business ventures in countries where Basque Centres are located.

F.4. The General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs will participate in organising Basque weeks with culinary, artistic, sporting, cinema and business presentations at Basque Centres.

F.5. The Basque Government will bear in mind the Basque Centres when preparing advertising and tourist promotion campaigns. By this is meant that it will provide the Basque Centres with all the tourist and advertising material about the Basque Country that is published (posters, leaflets, etc.).

F.6. The Basque Centres will look into the possibility of organising tourist trips annually from their countries to the Basque Country, both for members and non-members and to this end the Basque Government will provide logistic support and health care (where necessary) and will organise any visits to public institutions that are requested.

F.7. The Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism will provide grants for students attending secondary schools in Buenos Aires, Caracas, Mexico and Santiago de Chile.

F.8. The Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism also promises to inform Basque Centres about Basque economic sectors and structure via the Internet and to attend to specific requests for information.

G. Special requests

G.1. Now that the 1995-99 Action Plan has been assessed, a large number of new Basque Centres have been set up around the world, the peseta has been devalued against the dollar, the conclusions of this Congress for a new action plan have been drawn and the need to raise new action policies for recognising Basque private and public institutions around the world has been recognised, we should like to request the Basque Government and Parliament to look into the possibility of making a major increase to the budget of its programme of relations with Basque communities, without which it will be impossible to put the proposals that this Congress makes into action.

G.2. The Congress asks the General Secretariat for Overseas Affairs to take the necessary steps to obtain Basque Government bank guarantees for loans for purchasing or refurbishing Basque Centres' infrastructures for the amount not assigned in the 1998 budget, giving priority where necessary to applications made by existing Basque Centres.

G.3. In the same vein we ask the Advisory Board for Relations with Basque Communities to submit these conclusions and proposals to the Government's Cabinet for their final approval.

G.4. This Congress also believes that it would be interesting to disseminate in the media, the preliminary declaration supporting peace and the final declaration signed by all the representatives of the Basque Centres.

G.5. The representatives of the Basque communities here at the Second World Congress of Basque Communities ask the Basque Government and the Basque Parliament to agree to the official celebration of the Aberri Eguna as the day of all Basque men and women and the anniversary of the setting up of the first Basque Government with the presence of the Basque President, members of Parliament, former Presidents, ministers and former ministers together with as wide a representation as possible of Basque society.

G.6. As people who originally come from all the 7 provinces that make up the Basque Country, we ask the public and private institutions of Navarre and the French Basque Country to join in the celebrations of the Aberri Eguna.

G.7. We ask all those Basque Centres where pelota is played to be admitted to the Basque Pelota Federation as an eighth province.

G.8. Taking up a proposal made by a delegate from the Basque Centres in the United States, we propose that a contemporary sociological study be made together with the Basque Centres to define policies.

G.9. And finally, we propose that an i.d. card be created for all members of Basque Centres recognised by the Basque Government, in accordance with the characteristics highlighted in the attached document.