



TRANSCRIPCIÓN

RUEDA DE PRENSA DEL PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO, PEDRO SÁNCHEZ, JUNTO AL PRIMER MINISTRO BELGA, ALEXANDER DE CROO, DESDE EL PASO DE RAFAH, EN EL MARCO DE SU GIRA POR ORIENTE PRÓXIMO

Paso de Rafah (Egipto), 24 de noviembre de 2023

INTERVENCIÓN DEL PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO, PEDRO SÁNCHEZ

Good morning,

Thank you for being here with us today on such an important trip and I would like to thank the Governor and the Minister and all the Egyptian government.

Prime Minister de Croo and I conclude our trip to the region today at the Rafah crossing, after two very intensive days in Israel, Palestine and Egypt.

I think the Prime Minister will agree with me if I say that the trip has more than fulfilled all the goals we had set for ourselves. Among which, let me emphasise, was to engage with the main actors involved in this crisis in order to bring them a message of solidarity and peace.

We are at the Rafah Crossing Point. A very short distance from here is taking place one of the most serious humanitarian crises that this region has experienced in recent years. That is why it is absolutely necessary to establish a lasting humanitarian ceasefire to reverse the catastrophic situation that the people of the Strip are going through.

This morning in Cairo we thanked President Al Sisi for all the efforts Egypt is making to facilitate the arrival of humanitarian aid in Gaza. We have committed to send more humanitarian and medical equipments and supplies, and some shipments are already scheduled to arrive this week. Egypt, with President Sisi at its head, is carrying out commendable mediation and humanitarian work. I would like to thank him once again.

Yesterday in Jerusalem we also had very fruitful meetings with President Herzog and Prime Minister Netanyahu. I conveyed to them Spain's firm condemnation of the terrible terrorist attacks of 7 October.

I celebrated the agreement for the release of some hostages and to establish a humanitarian pause, while emphasizing that all remaining hostages must be released.

I also reiterated Israel's right to defend itself, but it must do so within the parameters and limitations imposed by international humanitarian law and this is not the case. The indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians, including thousands of boys and girls, are completely unacceptable.

Violence will only lead to more violence. We need to replace violence with hope, with peace. And this is also something I told President Herzog and Prime Minister Netanyahu yesterday.

The time has come to break for good this endless cycle of violence that has condemned the region for decades. We cannot afford, and above all Israelis and Palestinians cannot afford to continue to live under the constant threat of conflict and war and suffering. It is time to give the region a horizon of peace and prosperity and security, stability.

That is why we also wanted to visit President Abbas in Ramallah on this trip. We must offer Palestinian people a future of hope.

It is not just a question of finding a solution to the crisis in Gaza. Israel must be the first to take a comprehensive approach, which also deals with the West Bank and East Jerusalem. This will only be possible through the implementation of the two-state solution, including the recognition by the international community and Israel of the State of Palestine.

The European Union, the Arab League and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation have already called for an international peace conference to be held as soon as possible. We need to bring a credible political perspective to the whole process if it is to succeed.

Both Israel and Palestine must be at such a conference, and the international community must be involved in supporting it. Europe is ready to work to make it happen.

The aim of the conference must be to implement the two-state solution. Turning a new page of mutual recognition is the best way to sustainable peace.

But first, hostilities must end and my country, Spain, will continue to call for a lasting humanitarian ceasefire and will continue to work to offer a horizon of peace and prosperity to this beautiful region.

Shukran, thank you very much, muchas gracias,

P.- And your Excellency, Mr. De Croo. This is [inaudible]. I would like to address a question to both of Your Excellencies. The mediation that took place by Egypt, Qatar and the USA led us to where we are today, reaching a humanitarian ceasefire. How do you intend to support the mediation of an extension to this humanitarian ceasefire going beyond the four day cap?.

Presidente.- So thank you for your question. I agree with my friend Alexander. I think this ceasefire is a good step forward, but it is not enough. I think that the large majority of the international community agreed that we need a permanent ceasefire, humanitarian ceasefire. And and I also would like to highlight that the Security Council, the UN Security Council, also approved a resolution for humanitarian pauses. for humanitarian corridors. And this is binding. And this is mandatory for all member states of the UN.

So I hope that that this first humanitarian ceasefire is the prelude for a permanent ceasefire. And we can start conversations for peace and for a concrete resolution of this conflict and that this spiral of violence is stopped and we can provide peace, security and and all the needs, the humanitarian needs that the people in Gaza needs.

P.- [Carlos E. Cué, El País] For the for the two prime ministers. After two intense days, and especially after your meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu, do you see any possibility for the peace, ¿or a peace conference? soon? Are you more optimistic or pessimistic after this trouble?

Presidente.- We are realistic, Carlos. Thank you very much for your question. I think that the most important thing is that we go to this peace conference with two main goals achieved, or at least on the table. The first one is the permanent ceasefire, the respect for international humanitarian law, which is not the case nowadays, with this disproportionate response taken by by the Israeli Israeli government.

And second, with the concrete idea on how to move forward to a state solution which could bring peace and security and coexistence for both countries, Israel and Palestine. I think that this is a crucial moment. We are living a momentum, where all the international community must be engaged in a solution, a solution that could last, a solution that could be fulfilled by all, by both parties, and a solution that could provide the peace, the stability, the security and the prosperity that people in Gaza, in Palestine and also in Israel needs.

P.- Mr. De Croo, Mr. Sanchez, [inaudible] from Belgian public broadcaster VRT. We have seen these hundreds of trucks on the way to the border. What do you think? If you see all this aid, while it cannot go in, it cannot go to the people who need it desperately.

Presidente.- So what we feel?, I think that the same feeling that most of the people here that works every day feel: injustice, frustration?. This is not fair. This is not a fair response that the Israeli government should have been taken.

I think that the answer should be another one. Is the respect for international humanitarian law, the respect for the lives of thousands of children, kids , women and men that are suffering the consequences of this cycle of violence.

So I too believe that we need to call upon Israel. Democracies must be, must fulfill our obligations with international humanitarian law. And this is something that must be fulfilled by Israel.

So my feeling today, when I see all these trucks and the suffering of the people in Gaza, is frustration, it is also injustice and the need to do, you know, the correct thing to do, which is to provide all these humanitarian aid. Of course, from our side, from the Spanish side, we also announced four tonnes of humanitarian aid, in this case to the Egyptian government to complement all the needs that the Egyptian government needs for to provide health assistance to the refugees and the people coming out from Gaza.

P.- [Paula De las Heras Bergareche, Colpisa] First, if you allow me, Prime Minister, in Spanish. Presidente Sánchez, queríamos preguntar... el presidente El-Sisi ha trasladado hoy su hartazgo con la promesa de la solución de dos Estados a la que la comunidad internacional lleva aferrándose más de treinta años sin que nada haya cambiado. Usted ha prometido impulsar en la Unión Europea el reconocimiento del Estado palestino. Queríamos preguntarle si estaría dispuesto a que España haga ese reconocimiento de manera unilateral.

And, Prime Minister De Croo, the same question for you, please. Do you contemplate a unilateral recognition of the State of Palestine?

Presidente.- I think that the momentum has come for the international community, especially for the European Union and member states, to recognize this State of Palestine .

And I think it would be worth, it would be important, if many member states of the European Union, we do it all together. But if this is not the case, of course Spain will take their own decisions.

P. [Inaudible] questions about humanitarian aid to Gaza Strip. A lot of people say that it is not effective without permanent ceasefire as so many UN organizations cannot operate inside without permanent ceasefire. What are you doing regarding effective human humanitarian aid and permanent ceasefire?

Presidente.- So since the beginning of this conflict, we have been very vocal in asking the Israeli authorities to stop and to implement a permanent ceasefire. And this is something that we have been also demanding before the multilateral institutions and before the rest of our allies and friends, from different countries. So from our side, we have a very clear position on this, which is to stop the violence, to implement a permanent ceasefire and to allow the humanitarian aid to enter into Gaza.

P.- [RTL] I have a question, maybe a bit more personal. You have spent two days in the region. What would you keep in mind and, I would say, in your heart, as you are going back to Europe?

Presidente.- To me, I would say two images. The first one is a young boy of 18, 19 years old that we met in the kibbutz that we visited yesterday in Israel, which suffered, of course, these terrorist attacks from Hamas and he was willing to... he came back and he was telling us that he was ready to rebuild his home and to live where he belongs.

And the second one is perhaps all these images of a long file of trucks waiting to open these gates and to allow the humanitarian aid to enter into Gaza.

At the end of the day, as Prime Minister said: hope. And this is what we will work, I'm sure of it, dear friend, for that hope, for the region, the people in Palestine and the people in Israel.

Thank you very much.

*(Transcripción editada por la Secretaría de Estado de Comunicación)
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