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**ENTREVISTA DEL PRESIDENTE DEL GOBIERNO, PEDRO SÁNCHEZ, EN
CNN INTERNACIONAL CON CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR**

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CNN Internacional, EEUU 25/09/2024. Entrevista de CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR al presidente del Gobierno de España, PEDRO SÁNCHEZ, en el programa Amanpour.



P.- With hopes for a ceasefire all but faded, other countries have taken a different approach, including Spain, which this year recognized the State of Palestine. And, just last week, the Palestinian Authority, president Mahmoud Abbas, was welcomed in Madrid by the Spanish prime Minister, Pedro Sanchez, who's joining me now. Welcome back to our program.

Presidente. Thank you very much for having me.

P.- This must be taking up a lot of the conversation between world leaders. How concerned are you that now Hezbollah has responded -Israel says it intercepted a missile that was aimed at Tel Aviv- which is a red line? Where do you think this is headed?

Presidente. Well, I think there's a huge risk of escalation. I think that today it is really important that the international community put all our efforts in asking for a ceasefire to stop this cycle of violence and try to open the path of diplomacy. And this is where Spain stands for.



P.- And do you think that actually either Spain or Europe, or even the United States, can change the dynamic? Because, so far, none of the entreaties have worked. Israel has its own logic of so-called deterrence and self-defense.

Presidente. First of all, there are some U.N. resolutions from the Security Council that are mandatory for Israel, and they have to fulfill this UN resolution. Stop the war. Allow the entrance of humanitarian aid. And, of course, what we are advocating from Spain and other countries in the region, in the Middle East, and Europe, is to convene an international peace conference in order to create the conditions for the two-state solution, which is the only way to find a peaceful coexistence and security between Israel and Palestine.

P.- Walk me through the results of what you did. You took a politically courageous and slightly different path than many of the other nations in recognizing Palestinian statehood, Palestine as a nation. Ireland did it and Norway did it. And I don't know whether there's any more. But, anyway, very small number...

Presidente. ...Slovenia

P.- ...And Slovenia.

What exactly has been the result of that? Has that increased your leverage, decreased your leverage? Where do you think that's actually leading?

Presidente. Well, first of all, to me it's a very important step of coherence and avoiding this fairly criticism that some countries are blaming Western countries of double standards because we stand for respect of international law in Ukraine and also in Gaza. We stand for the same position, which is a world international order based in rules.

Second, I think that there are some important actors, also in Israel, that want to kill the idea of a two-state solution. So it is important that some capitals and countries that we were in the beginning of the process of this peace formula back in the 90s - Norway, Oslo agreements and also Madrid Peace conference-, we take this decision in order to flag the idea of the two-state solution, and remember all the international community, especially the actors involved in the region, that this is the only way to find a peaceful and lasting solution for the Israeli people and for the Palestinian people.

P.- So we've got the nearly one year since the Hamas atrocities committed in Israel, which led to the war against Hamas and actually the people of Gaza. We've got a war really starting and a great, you know, swaths of the occupied West Bank being flattened by Israel, a lot of fighting and deaths there. And now this northern front, the second major front. You have been talking, I guess, here with

various regional leaders, world leaders... Who have you been speaking to? What have you been able to determine and ascertain?

Presidente. So the mood is very pessimistic. And I have to share that pessimistic approach and vision, because so far, what I see from Prime Minister Netanyahu is a clear willingness to continue the war, not only in Gaza, the occupation of the West Bank. And, also, now we are seeing what is happening in Lebanon. So I'm going to meet the prime minister of Lebanon. I met the secretary general of the UN, talked about the situation in Lebanon. Because we have not only the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon - led by a Spanish commander- but we have also close to 700 Spanish soldiers also under the umbrella of this UN mission.

And talking with other leaders, what I see is a very pessimistic vision on what is going to happen in the near future. And that is why I think it's so important that here, in the UN Assembly, we call for a ceasefire, the end of this cycle of violence, and look for a diplomatic solution to this conflict.

P.- So is the UN still fit for purpose? And we heard a very robust call from President Biden yesterday, along the same lines you're saying. He said it is time, in this case, for these two parties to end this war. And he said, you know, we the US have proposed ceasefire deals, bridging plans, all the things that the US has done along with its other allies. And yet, he correctly identified the Security Council, the permanent five, as needing reform and being able, therefore, to get back to the UN role of actually promoting peace. Because right now it seems that anybody with the who doesn't want to - whether it's Russia over Ukraine, whether it's actually the U.S. over Israel in the military- they exercise their veto power.

Presidente. Absolutely. I think that this is the momentum to open a profound debate about our multilateral system. We have a multipolar world. This is a fact. But the choice is if we want a multilateral system, effective multilateral system, and that means coherence. The countries seated around the table of the Security Council must be coherent in Gaza, in Ukraine, standing for the same principles and for the international humanitarian law.

Second, I think that we need a reform and we need to enlarge the number of countries that are members of the Security Council. But not only that, also avoid the use of veto, which at the end of the day...

P.- ...It's just paralysis.

Presidente. ... Exactly. And last but not least, responsibility, because those countries must align all our policies towards our common goals, which are the agenda 2030, the



climate change goals and all the agreements that we reached in different conventions and summit at multilateral level.

P.- Let me ask you about Ukraine, because today the president of Ukraine spoke and he again said: Don't forget us. Do not weary on us. We've got to kill. We need more weapons. We need, you know, the restrictions on weapons are removed from us.

And he, also today, for the first time that I have heard, said that they have intelligence that shows Russia may be poised to attack their nuclear power plant at Zaporizhzhia and therefore presumably caused the worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl. Do you know anything about that?

Presidente. I mean, I have to commend Zelensky leadership, not only the battleground, but also to seek a peace formula that could end with this war.

We were convened in Switzerland this year. I think that we settled the pillars, the framework for a potential, uh, peace formula that could end the war with Russia.

And second, I think that it's important that Russia, and especially Putin, reminds that the international community, especially the European Union and Western countries, we are going to support Ukraine as long as it takes.

P.- Do you think Russia will turn up? Should it turn up? Because Zelensky has invited Russia to the second so-called peace summit, the one you're referring to. And do you see any evidence that Russia has been pressured enough yet to actually come to a negotiating table?

Presidente. Putin must understand that there is no way, no way, than to sit around the table with the international community and Zelensky and Ukraine and accept that we need to find the way towards a diplomatic solution to this war.

And from our side, from the European Union side, what we have done over the last year is to engage a lot of economic resources over €118 billion; €42.5 billion were devoted to military capabilities and the need for the battleground and the other for, you know, economic assistance for the public administration, the economic development of Ukraine and so on and so forth.

What I think is important is to keep that unity, that the unity among, the Western countries, especially the European Union, together with our allies from the US and Canada, and this I hope that it could still be the idea and the policy after the US election.

P.- No matter who wins.

Presidente. No matter who wins.

P.- Let me ask you about Venezuela. You have played a very significant role. You have granted asylum to the leader of the opposition, who's considered to have won the election. He is Edmundo Gonzales is in your country right now.

In addition, your Congress has voted to recognize the opposition as the winners of the election. But you as a nation, as a state...

Presidente. As government.

P.- As government have not done that.

Presidente. So the point is, now is the time for Venezuelans, the people from Venezuela to find the agreement that could end with this crisis.

So we stand for democracy, we stand for the Venezuelan people. We granted protection over the last years to 120,000 people from Venezuela. And, of course, Edmundo Gonzalez is one of them.

Second, we are very engaged and leading regional initiatives in order to put pressure to the political actors in order to, you know, find a way and a solution to this crisis.

And, of course, we want to keep the unity among member states of the European Union in order to put that pressure.

P.- Who has already also not recognized.

Presidente. Not recognized.

P.- Okay.

Presidente. Because what we do is to ask, first of all, for transparency.

P.- What is that mean?

Presidente. To ask for the publication of the voting records.

P.- For the Maduro government to public?

Presidente. No, no, no for the Maduro government, for an international verification.

P.- Yeah, but you think that's even reasonable to ask? Do you think?

Presidente. We have to, not ask, it's a must.

P.- Ok.

Presidente. It's a must because what we need is to see what were the real results.



P.- But he has no interest in doing that and that's why...

Presidente. And of course this is something that we criticize. That is why I think it's important, all these regional initiatives from President Lula and President Petro, from Brazil and Colombia, also the regional initiatives that we launch from the European Union and also the declaration in Santo Domingo last August remembering that transparency and democracy go together. And that is why it's a must to have the publication of all these voting records.

P.- And It would be great for an international.

Presidente. For an international verification.

P.- But that is for a country that actually recognizes and plays by democratic rules, which the Maduro government does not.

And this is the interview that I did with Maria Corina Machado and she made this plea to all of you in the international community. Take a listen.

“We are asking them to first of all, recognize what the Venezuelan people did, recognize the truth, make popular sovereignty be respected, and therefore recognize that Edmundo Gonzalez as president elected”. (Audio María Corina Machado)

P.- So...

Presidente. I agree with Corina. I think what is important now is to ask the Venezuelan institutions, the publication of these voting records in order to have this international verification.

What we have is a clear statement by the UN saying that there was no clear celebration of the elections in Venezuela and other international foundations such as the Carter Foundation.

So what we need is now to put the pressure in the Venezuelan institutions in order to have this publication of these votes.

P.- Just very finally, the US thought that it had put pressure on it, did sanctions, it promised certain sanctions relief.

Presidente. And we did it also from the European Union.

P.- And it went nowhere. They thought that Maduro might for once accept the actual results of an election, and he didn't.

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Presidente. Yeah. Well, that is why I think it is important always to remember that this is a solution that people from Venezuela must build up from there, from Venezuela.

And what we try to do from Spain and the European Union and international community is to create the conditions in order to have that solution.

P.- All right. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, thank you so much for joining us.

Presidente. Thanks. It's a pleasure being here with you. Thank you.

P.- Thank you.

*(Transcripción editada por la Secretaría de Estado de Comunicación)
(Intervención original en inglés)*