

UDALBILTZA[®]

INSTITUTIONAL DECLARATIONS 2002



EUSKAL HERRIKO UDAL ETA UDAL HAUTETSIEIEN BILTZARRA

INSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION TO THE CONGRESS OF IDAHO

23th of March

A FRATERNAL GREETING TO THE CONGRESS OF IDAHO

On the eve of the Aberri Eguna (Patriotism Day), UDALBILTZA wishes to thank the representatives of the Congress of Idaho and, especially, Messrs. Pete Cenarrusa and David Bieter, for the initiative they have taken in favour of Euskal Herria.

Despite the obstacles and pressures, because they have taken the voice of the Basques and spread it around the world.

Because, among so much misunderstanding experienced by Basque society, it proves both pleasant and exemplary that they should claim the right of self-determination of Euskal Herria. We Basques feel proud that the descendents of shepherds who went to America remember their roots and are willing to pave the way for the future.

The Declaration of Idaho contains three principles which are especially desired and claimed by UDALBILTZA. Firstly, the right of Basque citizens to decide; that is, that Euskal Herria must be and shall be what Basque citizens decide it should be. However, to achieve this, imposition and violence must completely disappear. Secondly, that citizen may only suitably exercise their right to decide in peace and freedom. And thirdly, that dialogue is the tool for channelling and solving political problems.

Peace, dialogue and respect for the will of Basque citizens is what UDALBILTZA demands time and time again.

To this end, we wish to express our most sincere gratitude to the representatives of Idaho, to the Basques from there and in the most heartfelt way to Messrs. Cenarrusa and Bieter. Because the tree of Gernika has borne and given forth its fruit.

In Euskal Herria, on the 23th of March 2002

INSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION IN VIEW OF THE HOLDING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF UDALBILTZA

13th of April 2002

We are Basque municipally-elected councillors from the different territories which make up Euskal Herria. The Basque People is a people located on both sides of the Atlantic Pyrenees, sub-divided into two autonomous realities in one of them, and without even administrative recognition in the other.

Since 1986, all Euskal Herria has formed part of the European Union. Said integration means sharing not only the same currency, but also an incipient common legislation and an area of free movement of people, merchandise and capital. However, member states of the European Union are reluctant to admit the recognition, development and shaping of the national realities which they contain. They have chosen to be unwilling to "yield upwardly", meaning the loss of sovereignty, and consciously "compress inwardly", thus imposing collective models of coexistence.

At the dawn of the 21st century and in the European context, our commitment to democratic principles constitutes a strategic and definitive approach.

Current Spanish and French legal-political frameworks are apparently shielded against changes which might consider the effective recognition of plurinationality. Our aim is clear: Remove the obstacles and open doors in said codes through in-depth and overwhelming democratic means, through viable, specific projects involving transition towards a new legal-political framework, with the majority support of citizens.

Here and now, any process or project of institutionalisation which may be considered by the Basque People must be presided over exclusively by democratic principles. The imposition of irremovable frameworks or processes involving joining by force prove to be radically incompatible with the strategy that we are attempting to promote.

With a year to go before the holding of municipal elections in four of the Basque territories, we wish as municipally-elected councillors making up Udalbiltza to declare and reiterate the following:

That some Basque territories and, within them, key elements in our collective identity such as Euskera, are suffering anything from total apathy to institutional persecution. We are neither able nor are going to allow this. We shall respond democratically, in an understanding way and consequentially. It is the duty of all, of Udalbiltza, of the Basque municipally-elected councillors and also of other institutional areas such as Regional Councils and the Basque Government.

They say, and it is true, that we are one of the peoples that show the most solidarity in many fields: in the donation of organs, in aid to countries in need and in development programmes. And yet, due to political decisions, they wish to deny us relations, solidarity and co-responsibility among Basques. They wish to deny us our existence and subsistence as a people.

We can and must collaborate with programmes and populations in India, in Africa or in Central America, but we cannot do so in Zuberoa, in Ezkerraldea, in Bidasoa, in Trebiño or in Nafarroa. Why? Don't we form part of the same people?

What other consequences or effects, other than positive ones for Basque citizens as a whole, would derive from real fields of cooperation among Basque territories and municipalities, in terms of the organization of territory, environment, economic and industrial promotion or linguistic and cultural policy?

Economic resources, albeit necessary, will be secondary if we fail to show and demonstrate decision and commitment.

We are municipally-elected councillors. We think and act, in addition to as mayors and councillors of our respective towns and cities, as Basque municipally-elected ones belonging to the same people. Because, beyond theoretical formulations regarding unitary political structures, nations built from the bottom upwards, guided by principles of respect and solidarity, principles of association or federation, not only become weakened and fragment but also prove stronger and more united.

Through the defence of the basic rights of all people and respect for plurality of political options and traditions existing in our country,

We propose a political project established on solid and real foundations, aware of the fact that projects involving social and political transformation require planning, time and maturing, social trust and the free adherence of Basque citizens, both men and women.

We share the aim and the commitment of providing Euskadi-Euskal Herria with a framework of sovereignty in which its capacity to decide for itself may be guaranteed in a globalized and interdependent world. Our will in this sense is a strategic one, as is our determination to use exclusively democratic, peaceful and political channels.

In Euskal Herria, 13th of April 2002

INTERVENTION IN THE BASQUE PARLIAMENT
EUSKAL HERRIA: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

12th of June

Intervention of Jon Jáuregui, president of UDALBILTZA, before the Commission of Self-government of the Basque Parliament: "EUSKAL HERRIA: YESTERDAY, TODAY and TOMORROW"

Gentlemen and ladies, a greeting to all and good morning: First of all he wanted to thank for the skilled invitation to them to UDALBILTZA, to expose our point of view and our reflection on the present reality of Euskal Herria, in this Commission of the Basque Parliament on Self-government of Euskadi.

20 years ago in the South of Euskal Herria the Basque Independent Community and the Leasehold Community arose from Navarre. At that time, we began to log-off pro-Franco fascist; we began to recover freed minimum; we began to recover our language, the euskera, dying thanks to the Franco; we were with an autarkic and weak economy, as us they demonstrated the crises to it of the following years; we had to reinforce with much effort all our enterprise network; our pressed culture and almost disappeared; the fact that sectors of the society were without protection and aids towards which the well-being partner was pending of a thread; we were, very far as much political as economically of the European Union, having itself not taken the first steps for which soon it would be the European project.

Since then they have happened more than 20 years. Specially in the West, where social, political, economic, cultural the development, in mass media and other aspects in the society is more and more fast and variable, I believe that it is necessary to make a pause to analyze from where we come and to where we go. Considering that the human rights, the freedom, the democracy, the national construction, solidarity, the balanced economic development, the respect to and the social welfare are our fundamental axes as much for us the Basques, like for the other towns of the world, near as much distant.

If I have mentioned the fundamental axes and the citizens, euskaldunes in our case we are in the same heart of the social organization, means, that those political organizations must fold (to comply) to the will responsible for the society; being a cause that the present systems and marks can be modified. The marks legal-political exist in benefit of the people, and not on the contrary, the legal-political marks are only tools for the good of the people, who the towns use to organize themselves in freedom; that these marks must comply to the free and responsible will for the citizens; that the legal-political marks must be based on the decision of the town and the people who form it.

The present construction of Europe has remembered to us, again, as they are the principles and foundations on which the construction of the society is based (social): on the one hand, it frees and person in charge; and by another one, to accommodate to that new organization to the will and reality of that town, with imagination and "reflexión" policies.

The construction of a united Europe is not thing of 50 years ago. Napoleón or the Hitlers, to mention some examples, tried it. But these two people did not respect the principle from respect to the towns, using the force and wanting to impose their project; not wanting to construct a free Europe, but a impostors empire.

The Europe that appears after World War II respects those two principles. Even considering all the possible critics and the possible failures, we can say that it is being a successful project.

In 1951, when Robert Shuman, the French minister of Exteriors of that moment, proposed Germany to form a community on the basis of the coal and to the steel, it also invited to other countries of free Europe, undressed this invitation, of all spirit and impostor intention. The countries that agreed formed the Community. They were not it did it. And lately there have been countries that have gotten up the European Community, other that they wish to do it and other so many that they do not want. Always respecting its free decision.

On the other hand, it is necessary to say, that the European Union is not a normal institution to the use, or either Super-Estate. It is neither a thing, nor another one. The men and women who on the beginning of the European construction, considering always the principles of the democracy and the human rights, based their

performances in the imagination political, to be able to create that new and original political organization; they had a great political idea to form an advanced and pacific Europe; in order to construct, making engineering, a new political formation political and to change the legal-political marks that were at that time, respecting desires of the towns and their citizens; modifying the concept of the Be-Nation and constructing a new frame of relations between the towns; objective barrel to truncate the belligerents Been Nations of century XIX, in cooperative and collaborating towns.

Europe is not an international institution norm since thanks to their institutions of decide the rights and the obligations of their towns and citizens. It is not either, Super-Estate, because it does not have general competitions, but only the rights that are mentioned in him European pact.

The free adhesion and the imagination and political engineering, to construct a society; the free adhesion and political ideation to program the relations between the countries; the free adhesions, in if same, request the respect to the human rights; and together with that, it demands the respect to the will and decision of the towns.

If I mention all these concepts, is because UDALBILTZA is based on these same principles. Before detailing the actions that we are going to undertake; I will explain in which more concrete bases we were inserted? And why she is necessary and legitimates the construction of Euskal Herria, within the European frame. At the present time, we continuously spoke of the globalization?

And somehow Europe is expression of the same one. As a result of the European Union the borders tend to disappear. Nothing has to do the situation of the States of century XIX with the reality, devises and concept of the present Be-Nation. We have a unique currency and the armies must not have the same paper that in century XIX. In addition, the free circulation of people, products is guaranteed and services. In a united and more and more extensive Europe, the artificial borders tend to disappear. It is for that reason, reason why the natural communities and towns are taking their true dimension. Of totally natural way, spontaneous and legitimate.

The case of Euskal Herria is well-known (or the case of Euskal Herria is well-known). Throughout the centuries, Euskal Herria, euskaldunes, been we have divided between two States. When disappearing the borders, the development of solidarity and the relations between euskaldunes of both sides are natural. We have a common language, the euskera, and formed a single town; each province with its own personality; dividing of realities different but the right to form a united society and to develop our own policy, culture and economy yet. A balanced and opened society, developing with the towns of our surroundings fluid relations and peacefully (pacific).

The construction of Europe is totally compatible, complementary and coherent with the construction of Euskal Herria. The globalization and the European construction require other stronger and integrated levels (integrating).

And to obtain this last one, the paper of the natural communities is obvious. One of them is Euskal Herria: by our solidarity; because we have a differentiated identity and we are open to other towns; by our language and culture, our economic dynamism and our model of society. Considering all this, more than 2000 elect policemen of Euskal Herria, the 18 of September of 1999 in the Euskalduna Palace of Bilbao, we created UDALBILTZA, with the following characteristics: Institution of municipal base, become attached to the street and ciudadanos", to the service of the Basques and leavening political, economic, cultural and social of this Town, as they demonstrate other important moments to it of our history.

"Institution of municipal base also, because the municipality whereas institution is accredited, exists and strongly is rooted in all the Basque territories; UDALBILTZA, therefore, is testimony of the territory of Euskal Herria, natural, national, cultural and linguistic reality evident, although nevertheless, politically divided in three situated communities in two States, and social and economically unbalanced and barely compensated.

"democratic and totally legitimate Institution, because the mayors and councilmen who we comprised of UDALBILTZA obvious we have been chosen in the ballot boxes and we have total legitimacy to represent our citizens and to collaborate and to develop between us projects of diverse nature having to Euskal Herria like reason of being.

"modern Institution because in a Europe more and more near and opened in their interior and where the natural communities and the

citizens tend to be developed over artificial borders, the Basques also we must right to develop to us like Town.

Institution, in sum, whose great objective is to contribute and to facilitate from the municipal base to that the Basques of all the territories of Euskal Herria know themselves, are related, they take contact and they freely develop to the initiatives and projects that understand like positive and opportune for their well-being and its development like Town. And all it, having and assuming several fundamental principles of base, between which it emphasizes one and that we approved in our constituent Assembly: to "impulse the national construction of Euskal Herria, understood like process dynamic and democratic and sustained in the free participation and decision of all the citizens vascos". Idea that as it is evident demands the defense of the fundamental rights of all the people and the active denunciation of any violation of the human rights.

With all these objectives, we met the first in Iruñea 6 of February of 1999, and later in the Euskalduna Palace in Bilbao the 18 of September of that same year to give to body and life to the Institution. All the elect policemen of Euskal Herria were invited, in an open and plural call.

From their beginnings, UDALBILTZA had to support to numerous attacks and innumerable manipulations on the part of some political forces and of some mass media, Spanish as much French. Time and time again they tried to make fail to UDALBILTZA and they attributed to characteristics and positions to him that did not respond to the truth, or to which in successive official notices and positioning it was indicated. They were such that, during the period of cease-fire, they were also dedicated to prevent the process and they did not contribute distension assets, like, for example, the approach of the prisoners to Euskal Herria, and in whose provocation the own ETA fell later of incomprehensible way.

By this same one, as we said it in the Aberri Eguna of the 2001, I want you remembered the fundamental principles of UDALBILTZA:

1. - Unequivocal commitment with the humanitarian principles and the defense of the rights and liberties of the person. The right to the life and the dignity of the person constitute the central foundation of our way to interpret the strategic reality, policy, society and our aspirations or projects.

By solidarity and the defense of that dignity of which we are subject all the people without exception, we are in favor in our towns and districts next to all the victims and of the people threatened by without ETA sense. We are elect policemen and we want to be specially ally of all the threatened councilmen and their families.

2. - The social construction and national Basque is had to sustain in the use of democratic routes, the freedom and the will and decision of the citizenship, rejecting the use of the violence, and respecting and making respect at all moment and without exception some the human rights of all the people, including the prevailed ones of freedom. Violence and national construction are incompatible.

Means and aims are united by a same axis: the exclusively democratic political action. The ETA violence, in addition to being ethical and morally execrable and to destroy the coexistence, contributes objectively and effectively to favor the strategy of those who objective and historical mission have by to prevent and to prevent the Basque nationalists to freely develop to a project of country owner of their destiny.

3. - The Basque citizens and citizens constitute the subject of the Basque nation. The free and democratic exercise of citizen will admits neither the imposition of unmemorable marks, nor projects imposed by the force.

We are, in addition to the oldest town of Europe, that speaks a language, the euskera, that constitutes the only alive testimony of the European prehistory, a country located between two States that it wants to surpass the consequences of the systematic negation of its national identity, consequences which they have caused a political and cultural reality disarticulated and a demographic and economic evolution, asymmetric and different.

4. - From the conviction of which the esteem to the freedom makes a town strong, exiling definitively of between us the violence, the individual and collective intimidation, La Paz it is our priority and the national and social construction our legitimate project. We have illusion and ability to work. Let us create in the men and women of our town. The one that Euskadi-Euskal Herria is protagonist of their present and owner of their future depends on all us.

Throughout History, the Basque Town has formed, from the Aturri (Adour) to the Ebro, a Euskal Herria of common and diverse territorial and socio cultural characteristics. We are almost three million Basques, distributed by the seven historical territories, the we conformed the Euskal present Herria.

Euskal Herria is located between two States that denies their identity to him like Town and, today, the Basques we did not enjoy no common institution. The Basque Independent Community and the Leasehold Community of Navarre have recovered important short of self-government, but the Basques of the North not even have an own Department. The nonexistence of a common legal-administrative institution prevents the harmonic development of our culture, our identity and our economic and social evolution.

Euskal Herria has at the present time 2.906.000 inhabitants, distributed in the 20,845 km² who extend between the Atturri and the Ebro. It is enough with following the passages of the Basque demography of last the 150 years even to appreciate the economic and social movements that have taken place in the set of Euskal Herria and each one of their territories. Then, in 1851, Euskal Herria had 874,000 inhabitants. On them half, 415,000 lived in the three territories that today conform the Basque Independent Community; 297.000 inhabited in Nafarroa Garaia and the rest 162,000 people in Iparralde.

Now, 150 years later, Euskal Herria it is populated by 2.906.000 men and women, it is to say two million more than in 1851. The Basque Independent Community has increased its population in a million and average one of people, Nafarroa Garaia in 240.00 and Iparralde in 100.000. Euskal Herria, that was a town of emigrants in century XIX, with preferred destiny to the Américas, happened to be a Country of immigration in century XX, mainly in period 1950-1975, being the main receivers the territories of Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and Araba. The fort industrial development of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, to which later Araba

and Nafarroa Garaia are gotten up, produces an extraordinary population increase in Hegoalde, through the massive affluence of immigrants attracted by the work market. The industrial revolution and the corresponding demographic movements transform the social appearance of the country, generating an opened, plural and multicultural Basque society.

But the emigration-emigration phenomena produce asymmetric movements in Hegoalde and Iparralde. Whereas the territories of Hegoalde were place of destiny of many immigrants, the young people of Iparralde immigrated to Paris and other industrialized centers.

The demographic evolution has been unequal in the different territories. The illustrative example constitutes those of Nafarroa Beherea and Zuberoa that have been losing population for 150 years. Nafarroa Beherea less has 20,000 people than in 1851 and Zuberoa are lost 9,000 in that same period, which puts its own capacity of survival at issue.

At the present time, 74% of the Basque population lives in Plowed, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa. 18% in Nafarroa Garaia and 8% in Iparralde. The little data of the time give a general concept us of the linguística composition of the Basque society in 1866-1868. Before the first industrial and demographic revolution of end of century XIX, of the 900,000 inhabitants of Euskal Herria, about 470,000 spoke in euskera, five of each ten inhabitants. Most of the vasco-parlantes they were concentrated in Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia and Iparralde.

Nowadays, the 2.900.000 Basque citizens, 650,000 know the euskera well and other 420,000 have a passive knowledge of same, according to estimations the accomplishments made from the sociolinguistic survey of 1996. Therefore, now the number of vasco-parlantes is greater and much greater if it is included to which they have a passive knowledge of the euskera. But it has well-known lowered the percentage of such on the set of the population and, consequently, its quantitative social presence is smaller.

In the Basque Independent Community the euskera is recovering of remarkable form and without interruptions. Also in the Leasehold Community of Nabarra, although of slower and moderate form. However, in Iparralde a continued backward movement of our language is taking place.

In the Basque Independent Community the number of bilingual young people grows of constant way. Also, it increases between the young people the knowledge of the euskera in the Leasehold Community of Navarre, although of less concrete and intense way. Nevertheless, in Iparralde a continued loss of the knowledge of the euskera between the young people is stated.

The Basque economy has reached the convergence with the European in the thresholds of year 2000. The economic dynamism of the Nineties has done that the GIP to per capita of Euskal Herria reaches the value average of the European Union.

But the historical evolution of the Basque economy has been unequal between the territories and, therefore, the productive structure also is differentiated from a zone to another one from Euskal Herria. The weight of the primary sector, mainly agriculture, is superior in the Leasehold Community of Nafarroa and Iparralde with respect to the Basque Independent Community. However, the presence of the industrial sector is more important in Hegoalde. Not thus in Iparralde, where the industry much more has a reduced weight; half of the average of the set of Euskal Herria. The economy of Iparralde, with an important influence of the tourism and the commerce. The services suppose the two third parts of their economic activity.

The rate of activity, measurement like the number of occupied of the total population, is still inferior in Euskal Herria in relation to the most dynamic and advanced countries. Although the rate of masculine activity approaches the parameters of the countries of our surroundings, the participation of the women in the remunerated labor world is still insufficient.

The occupational activity of the men is superior in Hegoalde in relation to Iparralde. Nevertheless, in this last territory, the rate of activity feminine more is elevated. As well as the state borders have been in the past the cause of the asymmetric development between Hegoalde and Iparralde, its disappearance offers an opportunity of collaboration between the agents of the different territories. These are, in summary, the basic characteristics of the present Euskal Herria.

To a year of the celebration of the municipal elections in four of the Basque territories, like elect grouped in Udalbiltza, we wished to declare and to reiterate: That some Basque territories and, within them, key elements of our collective identity, like euskara, are suffering from laziness to the institutional persecution. Neither we can, nor are we going it to allow. We will respond democratic, shared in common and consequently. It is obligation of all, Udalbiltza, the elect Basques and also of other institutional scopes like the Leasehold Delegations and the Basque Government.

They say, and is truth, that we are one of the most shared in common towns in many fields: in donations of organs, in aid to needed countries, programs of cooperation to the development... and nevertheless, by political decisions, it is wanted to us to prevent the relation, solidarity and corresponsibility between Basques.

It is wanted to prevent our existence and subsistence like town. We can and we must collaborate with programs and populations in India, Africa or Central America, but we cannot do it in Zuberoa, Ezkerraldea, Bidasoa, Treviño or Nafarroa. Why? We did not comprise of the same town? What other consequences or effects, that are not positive for the set of the Basque citizenship, would derive from real scopes of cooperation between territories and Basque municipalities, in the matter of infrastructures, of arrangement of the territory, education, economic and industrial promotion or of the linguistic and cultural policy?

The economic resources, being necessary, will be secondary IF we did not show and we demonstrated to decision and commitment. Located in the beginnings of Century XXI and in the European context, our bet by the democratic principles constitutes a strategic and definitive exposition.

The present legal-political marks Spanish and French apparently are armoured before the changes that could raise the effective recognition of the multi-nationality. Our objective is clear: To remove the obstacles and to open doors in these orderings through the deepening and of the democratic underflow, by means of viable and concrete projects of transition towards a new legal-political frame, with the majority support of the citizenship. Here and now, any process or project of institutionalization that considers for the Basque Town must be presided over by exclusively democratic principles. The imposition of unmemorable marks or processes of unavoidable

allegiance is radically incompatible with the strategy that we try to impel.

The time of the imposition finished. In this beginning of century XXI being, on the one hand, the free and democratic adhesion, and the desire of the population of new and bold political structures. Respecting and starting off of which we are and we have obtained until now. The towns and the societies have evolved. We also. Europe also.

The construction of Euskal Herria and the violence are incompatible. The average ones as the objectives must have the same base: democratic and only democratic actions. The one that he uses the standard of the death, the one that his political opposite assassinates, the one who despises the rights of the citizens, does not respect the life, does not respect the rights of the towns. Euskal Herria does not need representatives imposed by the force. It is urgent and necessary to create possible conditions to develop a true process, based on political and democratic solutions.

We must right to obtain to La Paz and the political normalization. It is necessary to back leave the strategies that failed in the past.

Thank you very much.

In Gasteiz, 12th of June 2002

DECLARATION ON THE PART OF MUNICIPALLY-ELECTED COUNCILLORS IN DEFENCE OF PLURALITY AND IN VIEW OF THE BASIC LAW PROJECT GOVERNING POLITICAL PARTIES

4th of July 2002

We, the women and men elected to public office unequivocally committed to defending human life as a principle of co-existence and respect for the plural nature of our society, aware of our level of representation and of the desires of citizens who freely elected us to office, wish to set out the following considerations in view of the planned Bill of Political Parties which will be seeking the approval of the Spanish Parliament in Madrid next weeks:

1 – This Bill constitutes a direct attack on ideological freedom since it restricts defence of and publicity for certain political projects. It is a legal initiative which is an unprecedented attack on political plurality, the very nub of the democratic system, in that it permits a political party to be declared illegal in view of the content of its political projects.

2 – The core of the mechanism envisaged by the Bill has been drawn up as a short cut to declare a political association illegal on the basis of crimes committed by a number of its members. Such a clearly undemocratic mechanism thus violates all the guarantees of the legal and penal system, with no account taken of the fact that it is individuals who commit crimes, and not political parties.

3 – This, then, represents another turn of the screw against the system of public liberties, and a fresh attempt to create punishment via legislation which is directed not at the general public but at the political dissentient – the worst formula to provide a solution to the problems within the society.

4 – We do not accept that the social exasperation and despair provoked by ETA's use of violence allows the endorsement of a bill which will not make no contribute to peace and normal political life in our country. On the contrary, it will merely serve to reinforce the posture of those who claim it is impossible to defend all political ideas

within an increasingly weak and conditioned democracy. It will likewise strengthen the position of those who still refuse to employ exclusively political methods; it will divide society, intensify the conflict and sow the seeds of social rupture.

5 – The main objective of this Bill, as part of a deeper wide-ranging strategy, is not to pursue the criminal conduct of individuals or groups, but rather it deliberately seeks to deprive a large section of our society of representation.

Thus, as representatives of the majority wishes of our society, we issue the following demands of those who have produced this Bill:

a) Inasmuch as the Bill is defined and decided within a representative section of Spanish society, but directly affects co-existence in our country, we demand respect for the wishes of the majority in our society – its institutions, politics and social concerns. We therefore demand that the Political Parties Bill be withdrawn immediately.

b) That consideration is taken of our commitment to building a plural and integrated society, casting aside any isolationist and clandestinisation dynamics which are creating serious destabilisation within our country.

c) That consideration likewise be taken of our commitment to pursuit of crimes using the instruments provided by a State of Rights for this purpose, with scrupulous respect for the principle of separation of powers, and a firm undertaking towards inclusive dialogue as the main tool to provide a solution to the problem of political normalisation and co-existence which has our entire society in its grip.

In Euskal Herria, 4th of July 2002

INSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION TO MARK THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE INSTITUTION

18th of September 2002

WE DO NOT RESIGN OURSELVES TO CONFRONTATION OR TO A PROLONGATION OF THE SUFFERING WE BASQUES HAVE THE RIGHT TO PEACE AND POLITICAL NORMALIZATION

Today, we are commemorating the third anniversary of the setting-up of UDALBILTZA, on the 18th of September 1999 in the Euskalduna Palace in Bilbao. And today, like yesterday, the Executive Board of UDALBILTZA (EAJ-PNV/EA) is reaffirming our principles and the work which we are carrying out for the purpose of "promoting the national construction of Euskal Herria, interpreted as being a dynamic and democratic process and sustained by the free participation and decision-making of all Basque citizens." We are municipally-elected councillors from the seven Basque territories who, through our unequivocal commitment to humanitarian principles and to the defence of the rights and freedoms of the person, believe in the existence of a People with its own history, with shared and complementary cultural, territorial, linguistic and social realities.

Within this reality we acknowledge and seek, through knowledge, mutual respect and the free adherence of people and territories, the shaping of a political community which is increasingly more related, more understanding, less dependent and more a master of its own future.

Euskadi-Euskal Herria, yearning for full capacity to determine its own future in Europe in freedom and with responsibility, is a modern People, open and with standards of living above that of the European Community average. However, the persistence of violence and different decisions taken outside the will and the feeling of Basque society are contributing towards a very serious deterioration in its coexistence and political stability.

To ETA, we once again reiterate our firm and clear demand: stop killing and let the Basque People decide their own future. Basque social and national construction must be sustained through democratic channels, in freedom and with the will and decision-making of citizens, rejecting the use of violence, and respecting and

being shown respect at all times and without exception as regards the human rights of all people, including those deprived of freedom.

To the Spanish Government, to the political parties which are the driving forces behind these measures and the judiciary: your actions are causing a serious, scandalous deterioration in democracy and in political pluralism, as you are directly attacking the basic freedoms of a democratic system, such as ideological freedom, freedom of assembly, expression and association. We condemn the lack of separation of power and the fraud that is taking place in terms of the set of guarantees that govern the legal-criminal code of any strong, healthy and consolidated democracy.

The Ley de Partidos (the Law governing political parties) entails a new clampdown against the system of public freedoms and a new attempt to create punitive legislation directed not towards citizens but rather towards the political dissenter. On the other hand, judicial actions suspiciously corrected and extended in a continuous way and with apparent legality, entail a blatant deterioration in basic freedoms, fail to respect the democratic institutions such as Parliaments, Juntas Generales (Regional Councils) and Town Halls and involve an infringement of basic individual rights.

All the aforementioned lead us to condemn the fact that we are experiencing a serious deterioration in terms of the democratic system and an underhand state of emergency. This situation is not going to contribute towards achieving peace and the political normalization of our People. They are strategies which seek confrontation in Basque society; they are strategies destined for crude electioneering with perverse ends; they are strategies of desperation, of the prolongation of suffering and of the most absolute defeatism.

There is an urgent need to create the political and social conditions to promote and develop an authentic peace process and a democratic political solution. Although the current situation invites us to optimism, we wish, as municipally-elected Basques, to show our people that we are not resigned to fatalism and that we are not facing an impossible venture.

Therefore, neither despondency nor withdrawal. Basque citizens – men and women – have the right; we have the right, to peace and political normalization. We must definitively disregard the strategies of the past which have already failed and which may arise and once again take shape. Strategies of political and social isolation which lead us to pre-democratic situations of political bans, constant violence and the actions and reactions which violations of rights, torture and, in short, strategic immobilism entail.

A political and peace process of the type demanded by Basque society requires the participation of all; it is something which we owe to our predecessors, to those who are not among us; we owe it to all Basques, being aware of contributing towards the best investment that our People need.

In Euskal Herria, 18th of September 2002