

The Role of Spain in Ibero-American Cooperation

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Abstract. This article examines one of the most actual issues of Spanish foreign policy: the role of Spain in Ibero-American cooperation. The historical background and claims of Spain and Morocco to these disputed territories, which are used by it to substantiate its claims, are presented. The problem is far from being resolved: the migrant crisis in Ceuta in May 2021 and Morocco's claims to the cities of Ceuta and Melilla confirm the difficult situation in the Strait region for Spanish foreign policy. The article deals with territorial issues in the Strait, in which Spain has jurisdiction, powers and special responsibility, using cooperation with the EU as a short- and long-term strategy.

Keywords: Ibero-America, Spain, international cooperation, foreign policy, economy

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Introduction

Ibero-America has always been a priority of Spanish foreign policy. Humanitarian, historical, social, cultural, political, economic and linguistic ties have made Ibero-America an object of constant interest for the Spanish government.

Ibero-America and the Caribbean have changed greatly in recent years, requiring a new look at Spain's relationship with the region. Ibero-American economies modernized, the middle class grew, and projects of integration and cooperation expanded. Against this background, Spain strives to maintain bilateral relations in accordance with the characteristics of each country and to engage in dialogue with all countries. Its goal is to strengthen mechanisms for political dialogue, coordinate action in international organizations and explore economic opportunities for mutual benefit.

Spain is one of the main investors in the Ibero-American economy and plays a large role in key sectors of social development and modernization, such as banking,

energy, telecommunications, infrastructure construction and management, tourism and the provision of public services. International development cooperation is one of the main instruments of Spain's Ibero-American foreign policy, since it is necessary not only to strengthen dialogue and develop cooperation in order to contribute to the strengthening of the institutions of the Ibero-American countries, but also to support effective economic reform processes that promote growth and promote redistribution of wealth and justice¹.

The relevance of studying the role of Spain in Ibero-American cooperation lies in the growing role of international summits in discussing global issues in the modern world. The first Ibero-American summit was held during World War II. The summits made a special contribution to the development of international contacts as an important new form of international cooperation.

The issue of the development of integration processes between Latin American countries and the European Community has been considered in the works of Russian and foreign researchers, but a number of aspects of the activities of Spain and Portugal within the Ibero-American Community remain insufficiently studied.

The article uses the results of research by the chief researcher at the Center for Iberian Studies of the Institute of Latin America of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Professor P.P.Yakovlev [16, 17, 18], the work of A.Andreev [1], N.E.Anikeeva [2], D.V.Bobrik (3), N.M.Bogolyubova and Yu.V.Nikolaeva [4], A.Yu.Borzova, O.V.Volosyuk, N.D.Nikolashvili [5], I.A.Gritsenko [7], V.M.Davydov [6], V.Yu.Dereshuk [8], D.N.Konovalova, Yu.A.Pavlova [12], M.S.Ryzhov [13], V.P.Totsky [14], M.A.Shepelev [15] and others, which examined a regional view of Latin American integration in its global aspect. The collection of articles edited by A.V.Shestopal "Ibero-American Studies: Ibero-American Relations with Eurasia, Including Russia, and the Process of Modernization in Latin America" examines the relations between Ibero-America and the Eurasian continent, including Russia. Among the works of foreign authors on this topic, we note the monograph by Celestino del Arenal "Ibero-American Summits (1991-2005)" [20], which defines the priorities of Spain in its interaction with Latin America, the article by W.B.Bristol [19], who back in 1943 considered community as an ideological concept, M. de Lema [21], who studied the history of the formation of the concept of the Ibero-American community, E.M.Quintero Niño [22], who wrote about the prerequisites for the formation of the Ibero-American community.

The article, based on conclusions already made by other researchers, reveals the role of Spain in Latin American integration thanks to the Ibero-American summit.

¹ Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain. Available from: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/es/PoliticaExterior/Paginas/EspanaIberoamerica.aspx>

Materials and Methods

Spain's role in South-South cooperation is of paramount importance. Its main organization is the Ibero-American Secretariat. Its activities include annual presidential summits, meetings between national focal points and the preparation of annual reports. The article analyzes the materials of the Ibero-American summits², Internet resources directly related to the work of the Ibero-American Community, materials relevant for studying the work of the Ibero-American Secretariat and the activities of the Spanish government. We used materials posted on Internet resources in English, Spanish and Portuguese, publications: El Pais³, El Mundo⁴, El Mercurio⁵

Results

Ibero-American cooperation played an important role in the process of creating the Ibero-American Community. To intensify it, the Ibero-American Summit was created. Its first meeting took place in 1991 in Guadalajara and in 1992 in Madrid, in accordance with the political desire of the 21 participating countries (22 with the addition of Andorra) to formalize the historical ties between Ibero-America and the Iberian Peninsula through dialogue, cooperation and solidarity.

The main principles enshrined in the "Declaration of Guadalajara" were: democracy; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; respect for sovereignty; non-interference; the right of every people to self-determination "in conditions of peace, stability and justice."⁶

Over the years, the organization of Ibero-American cooperation has established itself as one of the most authoritative in the region with specific proposals for citizens. A comprehensive "Global Presence Index" was created: in 2011, 54 countries were taken into account, in 2022 - 150 countries. According to the formula, 36% of a country's global influence comes from soft power, 43% from economics, and 21% from military power⁷.

² Official website of the General Ibero-American Secretariat Available from: <https://www.segib.org/>

³ España se consolida como el gran inversor de América Latina. El Pais. Available from: <https://elpais.com/america/cumbre-iberoamericana/2023-03-24/espana-se-consolida-como-el-gran-inversor-de-america-latina.html>

⁴ El Rey pide «marcos de estabilidad» para «aumentar los vínculos económicos» entre Europa e Iberoamérica. El Mundo. Available from: <https://www.elmundo.es/espana/2023/03/24/641dfaca21efa0d3028b45d4.html>

⁵ Los futuros líderes iberoamericanos que están cambiando el presente. El Mercurio. Available from: <https://elmercurio.com.ec/2020/10/12/los-futuros-lideres-iberoamericanos-que-estan-cambiando-el-presente/>

⁶ Declaración de Guadalajara. SEGIB. Guadalajara, 19 de julio de 1991. Available from: <https://segib.org/wp-content/uploads/Primera-Cumbre-Iberoamericana-de-Jefes-de-Estado-y-de-Gobierno.pdf>

⁷ Que es el Índice ElCano de Presencia Global. Estructura. Real Instituto Elcano. 2022. Available from: <https://www.globalpresence.realinstitutoelcano.org/es/estructura>

The XXVI Ibero-American Summit, held in La Antigua, Guatemala, in 2018, adopted the II Four-Year Plan of Action for the Development of Ibero-American Cooperation (PACCI) for 2019-2022. It was held under the motto "A prosperous, inclusive and sustainable Iberoamerica" [17].

PACCI II⁸ was aimed at renewing the Ibero-American cooperation launched at the 22nd Summit in Cadiz in 2012, towards a coordinated development, towards the promotion of the Ibero-American Knowledge Space (KS), the Ibero-American Cultural Space (ECI) and the Ibero-American Space Social Cohesion (EICS), defining three priority areas for action.

PACCHI II articulated this process in the 2030 Agenda, taking advantage of horizontal linkages.

For this purpose, II Pact has identified seven strategic directions ⁹:

- Strategic direction 1: Strengthening Ibero-American cooperation
- Strategic direction 2: Promoting social inclusion, eradicating poverty and reducing inequality
- Strategic direction 3. Development of knowledge, higher education, science and technology in Ibero-America
- Strategic direction 4: Promoting gender equality in Latin America.
- Strategic Direction 5: Promoting sustainable development based on the diversity and richness of Ibero-American cultures.
- Strategic direction 6. Promoting support for the environmental aspect in the region.
- Strategic direction 7: Strengthening innovation, entrepreneurship and digital transformation in Ibero-America. Spanish cooperation supports Ibero-American organizations, as stated in the Fifth Spanish Cooperation Master Plan 2018–2021:

Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB), Ibero-American Council of Ministers of Justice (COMJIB) and Ibero-American Youth International Association (IOJ), Ibero-American Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (OEI), Ibero-American Social Security Organization (OISS), Ibero-American Programs and Projects (PIPA).

Programs and initiatives are intergovernmental cooperation activities in which national governments express their willingness to cooperate in a certain area, agree on its composition, and are responsible for its implementation. This cooperation, which does not interfere with the sovereignty of each country in choosing a development model, management system and economic orientation, is easily integrated into the national strategies and plans of each country and reinforces these national plans and related public policies with joint regional activities¹⁰

Alliance projects are activities carried out by regional and/or local public authorities, private or public-private organizations that contribute to the development of Ibero-

⁸ Plan de acción cuatrienal de la Cooperación Iberoamericana 2015-2018 (PACCI). Available from: <https://www.segib.org/?document=plan-de-accion-cuatrienal-de-la-cooperacion-iberoamericana-2015-2018>

⁹ II Plano de Ação Quadrienal da Cooperação Ibero-Americana. Available from: <https://www.segib.org/wp-content/uploads/II-PACCI-ESP-PORT-Baja-OK.pdf>

¹⁰ España en la cooperación iberoamericana. Available from: <https://www.somosiberoamerica.org/onda-pais/espana/espana-en-la-cooperacion-iberoamericana/>

American countries. Alliance projects bring into cooperation non-state actors such as local and regional authorities, non-governmental organizations, associations, universities, trade unions, companies and foundations. The Ibero-American Center for Strategic Urban Management, created at the V Ibero-American Summit, is currently in the draft stage. The project's goal is to innovate governance structures and lead the reorganization of city functions "in the strategic planning of urban economic and social development for the main areas of urban activity."

Currently, a number of Latin American programs are being developed jointly with Spain, Portugal and Andorra. These include programs to support theatres, archives, public libraries and museums, as well as cooperation in education and training. Ibero-America is not just a geographical landmark. It is a structure in which member states and their societies dialogue and cooperate with each other. As a pluralistic space of countries with common values, cultures, affinities and interests, the Ibero-American Community enjoys priority in Spain's democratic foreign policy. The concept of Ibero-America, in contrast to the Latinism, paternalism and imperialism that guided Latin American politics during the Franco era, corresponds to the understanding of the continent as a continent of equality and progress [2]. Ibero-American cooperation has been a strategic constant in foreign affairs as a state policy, along with the European direction and the desire for multilateralism. The annual summit of heads of state and government of Latin America, Spain and Portugal is an important element of exchange between the participating countries. The purpose of the summits is to discuss the most pressing issues in the development of Latin American countries and develop common positions on these issues. Each meeting is organized to discuss an issue that affects the interests of all or most participants: "Globalization and regional political issues" (VII summit), "Trade and integration as elements of the development of Latin America" (IV summit) and "Problems of managing globalization" (IX summit). The institutionalization of the Ibero-American Summit, established in 1991, strengthened the principles of political dialogue and cooperation through debate and political consensus, the implementation of specific initiatives. New impetus for cooperation was given in the 1980s. It consisted of supporting democracies that could not be integrated without taking into account their social and economic characteristics. Then, based on support for the peace process in Central America, as noted by N.M. Bogolyubova Yu.V. Nikolaeva, a policy of coordinating interests and values through initiatives for institutional strengthening and technical cooperation began to take shape [4].

Over the next decade, they became the basis of relations, and the region became a priority area of cooperation. More recently, the accession of a number of countries in the region to the group of upper-middle-income countries has provided an opportunity to adapt strategies and tools to South-South and triangular cooperation to exchange experiences and create dialogue on public policy issues. Thanks to these changes, Ibero-American cooperation has become especially relevant.

Ibero-American cooperation¹¹ acquired a special status in the international system and anticipated modern models of cooperation. In 2015, a transitional development program until 2030 was adopted, which called for overcoming the binary model between North and South and, moreover, changing the structure of production and consumption in developed countries, choosing a broader system of cooperation. Transitional development involves all countries equally in addressing the enormous social, energy and environmental challenges facing the planet. The relevance of this approach has been heightened by the impact of COVID-19, in particular structural inequalities in the region and the ethical, political and socio-economic implications of events in Ukraine.

This evolution is reflected in Spain's participation in programs, initiatives and projects related to Ibero-American cooperation, in particular (PIPA) SEGIB. These are programs ranging from basic areas (culture, knowledge, social cohesion) to innovations in education, rights of the disabled, the elderly, and other interests).

Since 1992, the Spanish Cooperation has been one of the main participants in PIPA, contributing to the renewal of Ibero-American cooperation by improving quality, inclusiveness, uniformity of procedures, results orientation and mechanisms for monitoring and transparency.

Thus, despite the decline in imports of Latin American goods and services into Spain, the Latin America region remains a priority for Spain. The Kingdom of Spain and Latin America are linked by active economic cooperation, both at the bilateral level and within the EU, to solve common multidimensional problems.

Discussion

Second half of 2023¹², when Spain takes over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, it offers a special opportunity to contribute to the repoliticization of Euro-Latin American relations through projects that will revive the ideas of the Social Pact of cooperation aimed at an equitable model of development. The Spanish EU Presidency at the end of 2023 is an opportunity to revive Euro-Latin American relations and new agreements within the framework of the concept of progressive cooperation.

Currently, Latin America and the European Union face the common challenge of overcoming a socio-economic and geopolitical crisis, a serious health crisis, but this situation is also an opportunity to carry out reforms and solve problems such as inequality, tax problems or lack of trust between institutions and citizens. Spanish-European and Ibero-American cooperation has the experience, tools, resources and shared values to address these challenges

¹¹ Cooperación Iberoamericana. Available from: <https://www.aecid.es/dónde-cooperamos/américa-latina-y-caribe/cooperación-iberoamericana>

¹² Presidencia española del Consejo de la UE. Available from: <https://www.hablamosdeeuropa.es/es/Paginas/Presidencia-española-del-Consejo-de-la-UE.aspx>

Conclusion

Ibero-American summits have become a forum for discussing many international issues at the global and regional level. At each summit, heads of state and government commit to pursuing democracy and economic exchange and upholding human rights. This experience can be used in other international forums. Currently, Latin America is one of the most dynamically developing regions of the world. Brazil is beginning to play a greater role in international relations and is one of the BRICS countries whose growth guarantees the growth of the world economy. Ibero-America is gaining serious weight in the international arena.

In recent years, the countries of Iberia and Latin America have faced serious economic and political problems – crises, recessions and financial difficulties. But the Ibero-American Community has stood the test of history. It can be concluded that the Ibero-American Summit has become the most important and effective factor in the development of Latin American integration, especially for Spain and Portugal, and its role in relations between Iberian and Latin American countries will increase.

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