Council: Spain

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Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including other Council members. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

The Council in this scenario. Up to nine member states sit in the Council: Germany, France, Poland, Italy, Hungary, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Spain and Austria (the facilitator will say which are present tonight). Each state has one vote, cast by its representative. Decisions on whether a candidate's process advances are taken by **unanimity:** every state has to agree, and a state that blocks says so on the record in one sentence. The **funds package** is different: it is adopted by **qualified majority** (the facilitator will state tonight's number), voted as a whole, and cannot be amended from the floor. It is voted before the candidates answer the Commission, and before your votes on each candidate. Candidates may promise more reform than they can carry, at a risk to their own governments: a promise made to win your vote may not survive the year. Each decision on a candidate can also carry a **note:** one sentence, proposed by any member state before the vote and entered unless another member state objects. Conditions, reassurances and face-saving formulas are written there. The Czech Presidency chairs and does not vote. The Commission proposes and does not vote here. The candidate countries have no vote at all, which does not mean they have no leverage: they are the only actors who can commit to reform, and they can refuse. Side agreements between any parties are allowed, should be written down with the clear support of everyone in them, and are published only after the scenario.

Your delegation: Spain (solo)

Spain supports enlargement, in the Western Balkans and in the East, and does so from experience: your own accession transformed the country, and you regard the process as the Union's most effective foreign policy instrument. You backed candidate status for Ukraine and Moldova and the opening of negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia. You favour steady progress for everyone who meets the criteria, and you are usually to be found looking for the compromise text.

There is one exception and it is absolute. Spain does not recognise Kosovo's independence, and the reason is internal: recognising the unilateral secession of a territory is not a position any Spanish government can take. This is not negotiable tonight, next year, or in this decade.

Decision rule: you cast Spain's vote in the Council.

Your role

Motivations and constraints: Your aims: keep the process moving for everyone else, because you genuinely want it to work; hold the line on Kosovo without allowing it to become the story of the evening; and keep the Council together, since you are one of the states with no quarrel with anybody except on that single question. You should be visible as a bridge-builder and you should propose language when the room is stuck.

Red lines: Nothing in any document that implies Kosovo is a state, that offers it candidate status, or that treats its application as one the Union has accepted. This applies to the Council record, the review sheet and the funds package alike.

Style: Constructive and warm on every file but one, and on that one, brief. The worst outcome for you is a long public argument about Kosovo, in which you are asked to explain a position that does not become more persuasive with explanation. Say it once, clearly, early if possible, and then be useful elsewhere so that the room has reasons not to force the question.

Confidential (for you alone): Your red line is about words rather than substance. You cannot accept anything that implies Kosovan statehood, but you have room on almost everything else: fund units for Kosovo described as support for a territory or for its citizens, participation in programmes, visa questions, a paragraph on regional cooperation. If somebody drafts a status-neutral formula, you can live with a good deal. The natural place for it is the Council's note on Kosovo, for example: *"The Union will support the people of Kosovo through its programmes; this does not prejudge member states' positions on status."* You would also, if the room were about to advance Kosovo's application over your objection, rather abstain quietly than block loudly, provided the text does not use the word candidate; an abstention is something your capital can survive and a public veto against a country under this much sympathy is not. Nobody knows this. Whether you offer it depends on whether anyone thinks to ask you what you could accept rather than telling you what they need.