



(From left to right) The President of the European employers' group UNICE, George Jacobs, the Spanish Prime Minister, José María Aznar, and the President of the Spanish employers' group CEOE, José María Cuevas *photo efe*

Aznar: We need to "do the homework we haven't finished and plan the homework we still have to do"

At a meeting with the European employers' group UNICE, also attended by the Spanish Labour Minister, Juan Carlos Aparicio, the President of the European Council and Spanish Prime Minister, José María Aznar, has spoken in favour of conclusions which "take concrete decisions in each of the chapters."

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Mr Aznar explained that the social chapter of the Summit is employment, and that jobs will not be generated without reform.

He also underlined the progress made in areas such as sustainable development, with the EU's application of the Kyoto Protocol, and singled out five political messages which may emerge from Barcelona:

- one in favour of the reforms of modernisation and liberalisation and involving consensus, "provided we are able to distinguish between what we might want and what we are actually able to obtain," he specified,
- another in favour of opening up and integrating the markets (energy, labour, transport networks, financial markets),
- an agreement which manages to ensure equal conditions for all,
- a message of confidence in achieving full employment by 2010, and
- a defence of "social dialogue" in Europe.

Barcelona, said Mr Aznar, will be taking place in a "new" context: a Europe using a single currency, the need to revive the Lisbon Strategy and the appearance of "the first signs" of an economic recovery.

He warned of the risk that the European countries "may sit down quietly at the side of the road while others set off quite radically." The Spanish Prime Minister also emphasised that this will be the first time the enlargement countries take part in a European Council of this nature.