

Beat: Politics

## Fifteen years of punishment to Spain

### Last visit by a US president was in 2011

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**USPA NEWS** - The visit of President Barack Obama to Spain between 9 and 11 July will end fifteen years of unbalanced relationship between Spain and the United States. The last American president who came to Madrid was George Bush in 2001.

During that visit was welcomed by the Conservative Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar and King Juan Carlos I. Three years later, the Presidency of the Spanish Government was occupied by the Socialist Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, who in 2004 withdrew Spanish troops Iraq and, months later, from Tunisia, called on other European countries to do the same. The gesture was considered an affront by the White House and the new Conservative Government of Mariano Rajoy in Spain had to work hard to mend relations.

United States is the leading foreign investor in Spain and Spanish companies investing in the US and billed 60,000 million dollars. There is thus a bilateral relationship of interest to both countries. Nevertheless, since 2001, no US president has again set foot on Spanish soil. On the contrary, the King of Spain visited the United States on 19 occasions, the Spanish Prime Minister on 11 occasions and Minister of Foreign Affairs on 23 occasions.

He had an outstanding debt by the White House, Spanish Government sources say. The call for legislative elections on December 20, 2015, prevented the visit of President Obama will be held in the last quarter of last year. Nor could it be in spring of this year due to political instability and lack of Government in Spain. But the United States will hold presidential elections in November and time is running out.

President Obama will come to Spain from Poland, where he will attend the NATO Council in early July. It will arrive in Madrid two weeks after the holding of new elections and a Government still in office. It is unlikely that any political party get majority enough to form a Government before Obama's visit. There is also another danger: that in these elections the far left get a result that allows govern in coalition with other leftist forces. And that could affect relations between the two countries because the extreme left is in favor of leaving NATO and to review military cooperation agreements with the United States.

In this scenario, the visit is meant more as a recognition of Spanish efforts in the fight against jihadist terrorism and the reception of refugees. No signatures may be agreements, but political gestures are important and the visit of President Obama will serve to convey to the Spanish public opinion an image of cordiality and cooperation that Spain needed.

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