

Rajoy argues that the protagonists of economic growth are the citizens

Closing a business meeting in Guatemala

Madrid, 10.03.2015, 16:12 Time

USPA NEWS - At the close of a business meeting in Guatemala City, the Spanish Prime Minister stressed the dynamism of economic relations between Spain and the countries that are part of SICA (Central American Integration System).

Rajoy has also advocated openness and economic integration as engines of growth and job creation. According to the president of the Spanish Government, the mutual interest between Spain and the countries of the SICA (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Dominican Republic) can be explained "for historical reasons" but also by "excellent prospects" in Central America. Rajoy said that Central America is "a dynamic region, with average growth of nearly 4%, with a strategic geographical position in world trade, and favorable demographics". Moreover, he added, "institutional frameworks are becoming stronger, allowing further development and ongoing growth".

Mariano Rajoy has said that the dynamism of economic relations between Central America and Spain in 2014 allowed to reach a record high in bilateral trade with 1.861 million euros, with a maximum in exports to Spain of 578 million euros. Similar trends have been bilateral investment: 541 million euros of accumulated investment in the region by Spain and 4.213 million euros of Spain in the region.

On the other hand, President Rajoy has argued that the protagonists of economic growth and job creation are "citizens and businesses". In his view, governments must "accompany" create the terrain and the rules for "to develop their activities". It has also indicated that "the cornerstone of the reform agenda" of his Government was the economic opening because "historically Spain has grown increasingly has been opened".

Rajoy added that, after performing in Spain profound reforms, "not always easy either for citizens or for the government," and the first fruits were considered: in 2014, Spain led the growth in the eurozone to 1.4 % and all the forecasts for 2015 point to a growth of over 2%. "Spain grows "on a solid basis" and also creates jobs with lower growth rates: "In 2014, employment increased by 433,900 people and we expect between that year and 2015 Spain create a million jobs", he said.

In his opinion, "the work of governments is fundamental", as they should bet on either the open or by integration. In the case of Central and Eastern Europe, the work should focus on three areas: strengthening the bilateral institutional framework, promotion of regional economic integration processes and promotion of agreements between the two regions. Rajoy has also said that the business meeting is an excellent platform to explore joint projects: "Companies here today are the protagonists of this dynamism and governments are working at all levels to promote this work".

With the closing of this business meeting, Mariano Rajoy has concluded his official two-day trip to Guatemala, where he also visited the Centre for Training and Workshop for Spanish Cooperation School in the city of Antigua, has met with President of the Republic, Otto Pérez Molina, and has participated in the SICA-Spain Summit. The visit has been described as very important by Spanish government sources.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-3515/rajoy-argues-that-the-protagonists-of-economic-growth-are-the-citizens.html>

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V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jose A. Martin

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619