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**The Spanish prime minister Jos  Luis Rodr guez Zapatero, is determined that the Spanish Presidency-in-turn will give &lsquo;decisive impetus to the construction of Europe&rsquo;, which coincides with the &lsquo;new beginning&rsquo; of the Treaty of Lisbon coming into effect.**

Zapatero gave assurances that, from 1 January, Spain will work &lsquo;in complete cooperation and loyalty&rsquo; with the new posts created by the Treaty, by which the traditional functions of the rotating presidencies have been redefined, along with the European Commission and the Parliament.

Watch at the welcome messages to the Spanish Presidency of the EU from the Spanish prime minister, Jos  Luis Rodr guez Zapatero; from the president of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy, and from the president of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek.

According to Zapatero, Spain is assuming the Presidency at a &lsquo;key moment for the Union, Spain and the world&rsquo; given that we are in the process of recovering from the worst economic crisis in decades.

To achieve this, a more coordinated, social and sustainable model of economic growth is necessary.

&lsquo;The responsibility which Spain assumes from January entails being able to rise to these challenges,&rsquo; stresses the head of government, for whom the European Union constitutes &lsquo;the greatest engine for democratisation&rsquo; in the history of the continent.