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## Rise and Fall of a Centre Party. UCD in the Basque Country

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### Abstract

The Democratic Centre Union (UCD) was a Spanish political party whose origins lie in the electoral coalition formed on 3rd May 1977 by a set of liberal, social-democratic and Christian-democratic political groups born in the aftermath of Franco's regime. Its leader, until his resignation in February 1981, was Adolfo Suárez. Coming from the reformist sector of Francoism, he had been appointed President of the Government by King Juan Carlos in July 1976, replacing Carlos Arias Navarro. As soon as the UCD was formed as a coalition, and taking advantage of his prestige and contacts, Suárez announced his candidacy for the presidency of the Government in the first general elections to be held on 15 June 1977. As elsewhere, in the Basque-Navarre case, the UCD was rushedly created in the spring of 1977 in order to contest the elections to the Spanish Parliament. It had the support "from above" of the respective Civil Governments and tried to attract representatives of the moderate traditional elites. In the Basque case, UCD politicians were particularly persecuted by the terrorist organization ETA. For instance, in 1980, it killed four UCD militants. In this paper, we will explain the history of this political party in the Basque Country and how ETA contributed to its fall.

**Keywords:** Spanish Transition, Democratic Centre Union (UCD), Basque Country, ETA.