

Palabras de Su Majestad el Rey en la cena de bienvenida al "Mobile World Capital Barcelona" & "GSMA"

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I would like to begin by extending you all my warmest welcome to Spain, to our wonderful Catalan city of Barcelona. Many of you have travelled from abroad, even from very far away, to attend this key event and gathering of the international technology and communications community—the Mobile World Congress; I hope you make the best of it, and enjoy you stay among us.

Bienvenidos pues a Barcelona, esta ciudad tan visitada y querida por gentes de todo el mundo y a la que siempre me he sentido tan vinculado, por la Historia, por vivencias personales y familiares, por su peso económico y cultural; una ciudad donde al espíritu emprendedor de sus gentes se suma la pluralidad de sus orígenes y sensibilidades. Todo ello hace de la capital de Cataluña un ejemplo de la diversidad del conjunto de España y un referente del mejor empuje emprendedor español.

Una empenta que representa una tendència profundament arrelada a Catalunya i que avui es posa al servei de les tecnologies de les comunicacions i en benefici de tots i de tota la Comunitat Internacional. Tot això ha estat possible gràcies a la més estreta i lleial col.laboració entre les Administracions implicades —l'Ajuntament de Barcelona, la Generalitat de Catalunya i el Ministeri d'Indústria, Energia i Turisme—, i els sectors públic i privat.

These are times of intense economic transformation. The world is changing rapidly, driven by new ways of thinking, producing and competing, mostly borne out of the digital innovation. This transformational force affects all sectors and industries, and is changing the ways in which we collaborate, work, and share information.

In this context, I think we all feel that technology should help to build not only a more competitive and productive economy, but also a more fair one; an economy that creates greater job opportunities, particularly for young people and those most affected by the present circumstances, who are suffering the remains of the biggest economic crisis in our lifetime. The digital world, its accelerated development, ought to help us bridge dramatically so many remaining—or still growing—gaps of inequality, wealth distribution, access to knowledge and education, financial literacy... Indeed things are moving in that direction, but we need to take it to the level of true systemic change.

To take advantage of these opportunities, we not only need resolved action from our institutions. Technology and mobile sector private businesses also play a vital role, because it is they who best understand this transformation and who can, through their investment and excellent human capital, help us to overcome the challenges of the 21st century.

That is why Barcelona's designation as Mobile World Capital is so important, as it allows institutions to make contact with leading businesses and initiatives in the mobile technology sector within a setting of maximum global visibility and collaboration.

The Mobile World Congress has consolidated its position as the world's leading mobile technology trade fair. This year, just as in previous editions, it has attracted government leaders, mobile operators and industry suppliers from around the globe. Over the next four days, it will give you the chance to discuss the trends that are going to shape the mobile technology market, as well as the opportunity to coordinate public and private agendas in order to improve all our countries' economies.

On this occasion, I would like to highlight some important elements of Spain's contribution to the global telecom & IT industry. I am talking about the international scope of our businesses and their vast capacity for developing technology. These are crucial elements in a world undergoing a relentless process of globalization interdependence and connectivity, elements that give a decisive incentive to the global digital ecosystem. In this context, large companies can give smaller businesses essential leverage, driving them forwards. We should place ourselves firmly in support of technology in order to create jobs and new industries.

Another key benefit of the Mobile World Congress is fostering an entrepreneurial and innovative spirit. We need entrepreneurs from all countries to grasp the opportunities offered by technology in order to create new products and services. This innovative and global vision must also permeate education and research systems, public and private policies and incentives, and societies as a whole. It is also crucial to have a forum at which we can learn from those who have already travelled this path, present and share ideas, and make contact with international investors and customers.

On this matter, it is very important to mention young people and the upcoming generations—the 'digital natives'—who have so much to contribute. We need our young people to help build a brighter and more promising future, and it is crucial that both businesses and governments invest in training these new generations, and look to them to lead this process of transformation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no doubt that the mobile technology sector is today —more than ever— a key component of competitiveness, and therefore it must be properly factored-in, and no one can be left behind.

I would like to close by offering my best wishes for a successful Congress, already looking ahead to next year's edition, which, once again, will have the full support and commitment of Barcelona, Catalonia and the whole Kingdom of Spain.

Thank you very much.