

Palabras de Su Majestad el Rey en la cena oficial del GSMA Mobile World Congress 2017

Barcelona, 26.02.2017

Buenas noches, bona nit, good evening ladies and gentlemen,

Once again –and it has been a few years running–, I have the pleasure and the honor of welcoming you all –individuals, institutions, companies, and later also the general public– as we gather to participate in the 2017 GSMA Mobile World Congress here in the lovely and beautiful city of Barcelona.

This extraordinary event truly puts us, once more, in the mobile industry's center of attention at a global scale, and we feel both proud and honored for that. However it is no easy task, and it says much about the good work that has been carried out for years by all those involved. So allow me to thank and congratulate all of them; and also to show, as Spaniards, our special gratitude to GSMA and to all of you for choosing this city and our country –so often– to host such an important meeting.

Some of us are here to show and present, others to listen and learn; I hope most will also enjoy...; but all of us, in different ways, are here to participate, to promote the growing technological, economic, social and cultural capital embodied by the mobile industry, and recognize the tremendous achievements that it is carrying out.

Sean, pues, muy bienvenidos a Barcelona; gran ejemplo de impulso emprendedor, que se manifiesta en muy distintos ámbitos: desde la cultura a la ciencia e investigación pasando por la empresa propiamente y las tecnologías más innovadoras en casi todas las áreas imaginables. Precisamente, la industria del móvil que protagoniza este Congreso es expresión de la mejor conjunción entre vanguardia técnica y eficiencia empresarial, al servicio de las comunicaciones más avanzadas, para ofrecer mejores productos y atender mejor las necesidades de los ciudadanos.

Al mismo tiempo, esta es una buena ocasión para que quienes han venido desde fuera de España puedan conocer mejor nuestro ecosistema nacional de empresas, especialmente en este ámbito tecnológico, muchas de ellas pioneras en sus ámbitos de actuación y con un gran potencial de desarrollo.

Aquesta nova edició del Congrés –i també del fòrum "For Years From Now"– són fruit d'una intensa tasca de cooperació i coordinació entre l'Ajuntament de Barcelona, la Generalitat de Catalunya, el Ministeri d'Energia, Turisme i Agenda Digital, i la GSMA.

La col·laboració en aquest àmbit, que és un veritable exponent de la revolució que vivim, constitueix una exigència ineludible. Igualment, aquesta col·laboració lleial i generosa és la que millor facilita i impulsa el creixement econòmic, un major coneixement i interconnexió entre les persones, i el progrés i el benestar general de la societat. Per últim, el recolzament de tots fa possible que aquesta cita de referència

mundial aportí prestigi, reputació i reconeixement a Barcelona, Catalunya i al conjunt d'Espanya.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mobile technologies, as we all know, have been the origin of some of the greatest economic and social transformations that we have experienced in recent decades. Their rapid development is enabling us to advance towards an increasingly interconnected world, one in which income generated by the mobile web is skyrocketing, and we are about to break the barrier of five billion people who are connected through these technologies. Likewise, we are moving towards connecting not only people, but also objects.

At the same time, the development of 5G, the fifth generation of mobile technologies, heralds another revolution in our lives and our economies, enabling the provision of new, as yet inaccessible, services. In sum, this industry has transformed our economies and our lives: the way we do business, our political or institutional parameters, public services, entertainment, education and training, our social practices...etc. Moreover, it will surely continue to do so in the future. Over the next few days, we have access to a privileged window into that future.

The Mobile World Congress will give us the opportunity to get to learn first-hand about the potential that these new technological advances have to offer, as well as about innovative products and services that will effectively become available to the general public in the next few months and years.

The MWC is undoubtedly an exceptional event not only for the industry, but also for public-sector stakeholders. Its Ministerial Program will be addressing issues of great interest to all of our countries, such as advancing towards the goal of smarter, more sustainable cities —a field to which Spain is intensely committed.

Likewise, we are very glad and excited to see how progress towards 5G is steadily materializing, and on this point I feel it is important to highlight that Europe needs to redouble its efforts in participating fully in 5G the development, and reaping the benefits to be gained from its generalized rollout. These technologies are going to enable new services to be provided to our citizens and our companies, enabling us to operate more efficiently and sustainably.

However, while we are well aware of the irrefutable benefits that these technologies are bringing, they should also enable us, above all, to advance towards a more open, inclusive, cohesive and therefore more prosperous society. We cannot renounce these objectives, as we always ought to seek for a safer, more humane and humanistic development in our technological and material advances. It makes sense from a moral perspective, but also from an economic one.

As I had the opportunity to point out last year at this same forum, there are still huge groups of people around the world that have yet to benefit from these new technologies. And we know that it is only by their leaping into the digital culture and their access to the array of technology it entails, that we will be able to attain truly sustainable digital development.

All of this involves a serious effort on the educational front, including better training in this area from a dual perspective:

- On the one hand, it is a question of providing people with the necessary knowledge and skills so that they can make technically correct use of the constantly evolving hardware and software that offer immense possibilities, which everyone needs to know how to optimize and leverage.
- On the other hand, it is also a question of this use being appropriate from the standpoint of each person's comprehensive development, of respect for individual rights, and of protecting the general interest.

With regard to multilateralism and global interests, we must bear in mind the role of these technologies in our advance towards achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Today, we see how they enable thousands of people to access banking services, which used to be entirely out of their reach; or how they facilitate access to training and to a huge amount of information or knowledge for groups that would otherwise lack any access to them. Expanding the possibilities that these technologies offer to populations all over the globe must be a priority for all of us, regardless of whether we are public or private sector stakeholders.

But Goal N°5 –Gender Equality– finds here at the MWC a new and exciting emphasis with the Women4Tech program. A great initiative that will draw attention and debate on issues like women's education, career development, work environment, communication, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Finally, I would like to point out a problematic and complex issue that bares the power to put all these advances at risk. I am referring to cybersecurity. We just cannot allow for insecurity to occupy our connected digital world and harm or jeopardize much of what we have built or achieved in recent decades; a world which so intensely determines our daily lives, upon which we are growingly dependent, and which requires a more robust and concerted response to both reduce vulnerabilities and prevent from the potential loss of general confidence it could induce.

We are in dire need for much more collaboration at the international level, and between the public and private sectors. In Spain, and throughout Europe, we are already taking decisive steps in this direction. Therefore, I invite all of you here today to get on board with us, in a spirit of collaboration and teamwork. We will all benefit from it, and we owe it to future generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is our responsibility to guide the mobile sector down the right path. Our economic growth, as well as many social advances, are depending on this. I have no doubt that, with the joint effort of companies and governments, we will continue to make progress here.

As I end my remarks, with my best wishes for this Congress, I would also like to highlight and invite you to the 4th edition of 4YFN (Four-Years-From-Now). At this event, born out of collaboration amongst public institutions and entities –launched

through the Barcelona MWC Foundation—, young people, and not-so-young people, will show us how they want to change the world with their ideas.

We are keenly aware that precisely these trailblazers, and in general our young people, are the greatest source of innovation and our finest asset as we move towards the sustainable and integrated future that we all want to see; the YoMo (Youth Mobile Festival) is surely a great example of that.

I am sure that your participation in the Congress will be highly satisfactory, and I trust that you will also enjoy your stay in the city of Barcelona, which welcomes you with open arms.

Thank you very much, Moltes gràcies, Muchas gracias.