

Palabras de Su Majestad el Rey en la cena de bienvenida del Congreso Mundial del Móvil GSMA

Barcelona, 25.02.2018

Allow me to begin by expressing my gratitude for having the great honor and pleasure of joining you and addressing you –once again– at this wonderful event that the city of Barcelona hosts since 2006: the GSMA Mobile World Congress. It has been for many years that I have had the thrill of being connected and committed to this top class world event. I genuinely share the excitement and expectation that thousands of professionals, investors, visitors, techies, journalists and consumers place each year at the outstart of this week, in what is surely to be another remarkable time for the B-MWC, for the GSMA community, and for all of us.

Throughout the years I have also had the privilege of meeting many of the leaders that drive the world of technology and business, who come here and naturally take center stage, making all the headlines. But it is also specially rewarding to see the involvement of our younger entrepreneurs and the focus or promotion you actively seek for them. What a fantastic feeling it is to share and witness so closely the flourishing of a great technological project of such great impact the world over, one that fills us with hope, feeds our creative energy and deserves all our support.

So, here we are again, for a new edition of the MWC. And I am delighted to give you all the warmest welcome to Spain, to Catalonia and particularly to the truly global city of Barcelona and today World Mobile Capital.

Welcome also ‘to a glimpse into the world of tomorrow’. Let us discover together how and how much our lives will continue to rapidly change through mobile technology in ways we still have difficulty to understand, foresee or even imagine. We are immensely honored and happy to host you all, and wish you a both enjoyable and productive week among us.

Efectivamente, el Congreso Mundial del Móvil y todo lo que supone de contenido y como gran acontecimiento –desde su 1ª edición en 2006 y hasta hoy– tiene un evidente y directo impacto sobre el progreso y el bienestar de millones de ciudadanos, sobre el conjunto de las sociedades. Al favorecer su comunicación y su mejor entendimiento, mejora las condiciones de vida de cada individuo y facilita la creación y la proyección del conocimiento, así como la difusión de ideas innovadoras.

Esta es una cita clave que los barceloneses reciben, conscientes de la importancia y trascendencia de cómo —y hacia donde— se mueve la tecnología digital móvil en nuestros días, y de que ya hay pocos ámbitos de nuestras vidas y de nuestras economías que queden al margen de su influencia. Ha cambiado nuestra visión del mundo y esta tecnología incide con fuerza en el desarrollo económico y social de nuestro país; diría incluso que en gran medida cada día lo condiciona más.

Igualmente, en un foro como este, quiero subrayar la capacidad tecnológica de nuestras empresas punteras y cómo esa apuesta no las aparta en absoluto de su compromiso con el bienestar de nuestra sociedad y con la creación de empleo. La revolución digital en la que estamos inmersos precisa de una visión que sepa transformar en oportunidades de progreso los desafíos que impone el desarrollo industrial y tecnológico. En España contamos con algunos ejemplos de referencia mundial en muchos sectores, particularmente en el sector textil y de la moda y en el de la fabricación de componentes del automóvil y otros. Está demostrado que los países tecnológicamente más avanzados son los que alcanzan mejores índices de empleo.

Des del Mobile World Congress de 2006 fins avui, aquest Congrés ha guanyat en reconeixement i prestigi internacional. No hi ha dubte que la història d'aquest Congrés a Barcelona és la història d'un èxit assolit al llarg d'anys de treball. Un èxit que l'hi devem, en primer lloc als barcelonins, al seu dinamisme i esperit emprenedor; que, a més, tenen l'oportunitat d'assumir un paper central per a la seva ciutat en el gran repte d'un món cada cop més urbà, ja que és un fet que ja més de la meitat de la població mundial viu en ciutats.

L'hi devem també a tots vostès, que any rera any acudeixen a aquesta trobada implicats directament en el desenvolupament d'aquestes noves tecnologies; persones que gaudeixen també de Barcelona.

I l'hi devem així mateix al compromís i la col·laboració entre el Govern central, la Generalitat de Catalunya i l'Ajuntament de Barcelona que, al costat de les corporacions i entitats com GSMA i la Fira de Barcelona, han fet possible aquest èxit continuat. La cooperació institucional amb objectius clars i en benefici de tots és una clau evident d'aquest èxit. Aquest mateix compromís ferm de les nostres administracions, corporacions i companyies ha de ser sempre un propòsit essencial perquè aquesta trobada segueixi consolidant de cara al futur la seva projecció i influència a tot el món; i ho faci des d'aquí mateix, des de Barcelona, candidata per albergar el centre tecnològic europeu que desenvolupi la tecnologia 5G.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year, the motto for the Congress is “Creating a better future”; a future which concerns us all, and one in which new technologies will clearly continue to play a crucial role. The GSMA and the MWC have committed to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals; this clearly reflects the need to fuse the ongoing digital transformation with these Goals, which focus on such areas as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice.

We all know that innovation, technology and digital transformation are key to improving competitiveness, and that entering the digital world is a necessity, not a choice. Digital society is already an unavoidable reality. Its advance is exponential, and in the wider context of globalization it is reshaping relations between producers and consumers, and social relations in general. So I’m sure this gathering is an ideal forum to analyze these changes, to share information about problems and seek for solutions. In doing so, we can obtain greater insight into the effects of the digital transformation that we must apply to our economic and business management.

New technologies create opportunities for new enterprises, but also oblige the well-established ones to redefine, adapt or improve. In particular, they offer new ways of redesigning production processes, to increase productivity and improve competitiveness. In fact, there are outstanding examples of companies that have successfully incorporated digitalization into their value chains, resulting in considerable improvements.

The digital transformation is also changing the way we do business and the products and services that are available. In short, it is reshaping trade and the behavior of consumers is also changing, fundamentally through the ever expanding e-commerce. Proof of this ongoing and rapid transformation is found all over the place: Take the fact that Asia-Pacific is home to more than half of all online shoppers, an increase which has been particularly driven by m-commerce; or that in China, 73% of online purchases are made through mobile devices.

Digital transformation also creates opportunities in production areas relating to the economy, society, education and health. We do not know what the limits are, but the implications are clear in terms of economic growth, quality of life and social well-being. This is why it is important that technological advances are focused on achieving the UN's SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals); putting people first, as the fastest or safest way to achieve them.

To conclude, as I said previously, the digital transformation is a key driver of wider social changes at both a global and local scale. We must accept this important and inevitable process as a challenge, not a threat. This Congress is proof of our understanding of this opportunity; and next year, we will meet once again to share our thoughts and experiences, at this seminal event, to build a better world together.

Thank you very much and enjoy the evening, moltes gràcies, muchas gracias.