

Palabras de Su Majestad el Rey en la “XXIX International Summit of Business Think Tanks”

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First of all, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate all of you in the Círculo de Empresarios on your 40th anniversary. It's certainly a good age in a human scale, but for all of us in Spain it also means much more, especially for those of us above mid-forties...

The reason I say this is because this period, the last 40yrs of Spain's history, mark a unique and successful chapter of a society that has truly transformed itself in all senses: Democratic and institutional governance, economic development, social security and public healthcare, education and science, free and open markets, international presence... and entering the EV, NATO...

And in all that story of success –with all its ups and downs, and with all the remaining challenges we need to deal with– civil society institutions have indeed played a fundamental role. Within that role, Círculo de Empresarios should rightly be proud in claiming it has exercised a leading part: in analysing and forecasting problems with an independent stance or in proposing useful ideas for our country's progress and modernization; by speaking up learned and qualified opinions on many matters of public interest –especially but not exclusively– related to the economy. In this regard, the Círculo is a good example of how important it is for society, through the institutions representing different sectors, to commit to the defense of its values and of the public interest.

Indeed, the Círculo has contributed to a dynamic debate on our society, such as education, healthcare, pensions, and the public deficit. Moreover, it tackles issues more directly related to the business world, such as the need to increase the size of companies, which is one of the safest surest roads to job recovery and consolidation, and generally, to economic growth; or the regulatory framework for corporate or market development; also issues related to the EU, to banking and finance, international trade and investments...

Promoting debate is indeed one of the Círculo's essential contributions, since the exchange of ideas contributes to enrich our approach to these important issues, and reach solutions to the problems addressed. The response we give to these questions will determine the health of our welfare state, a basic element in the stability and progress of our democracy.

The Círculo has also played a key part in structuring civil society, developing collaboration initiatives with other associations and entities to better defend their shared principles and to the benefit of society as a whole. An example of these initiatives is today's summit. This is the venue for spreading the Círculo's ideas beyond our borders,

in a world that should aspire to be increasingly united. And since I'm here more to listen and think then to speak.

Now, we are going to have the opportunity and privilege to listen to what I'm sure will be some very interesting reflections coming from a group of highly prestigious personalities, regarding the challenges posed to us by the still ongoing and deepening globalization; and the more recent, mobility complex and also accelerated influence of the digital economy, one of the more clear and extended effects of innovation today. But there are many more embedded in this broad concepts or modern trends: Shift geostrategic center of gravity, environment migrations.

But those two broad challenges are already having a profound impact on the spheres of education and employment. If we can address them appropriately, we will be able to advance towards a more inclusive and sustainable economic system.

The crisis of these past years has placed us in an insecure and unstable world, one with marked new social divides. A world that is facing major threats and uncertainties. I am sure that joint reflection, debate, and exchange of ideas, as I pointed out, will help us find, among all of us, solutions to those major challenges.

With my best wishes for your every success at this event and for your long term aspirations, it is now my honor to hereby declare open this 29th International Summit of Business Think Tanks.

Thank you very much.