

Palabras de S.M. el Rey en la cena con motivo de la Cumbre UEº

05.10.2023

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

It is a real honour and a pleasure, for the Queen and for myself, to welcome you to Spain and to the lovely Andalusian city of Granada. We are all proud here to host this 3rd summit of the EPC, during our Presidency of the EU Council.

Few cities in Europe would be more appropriate than Granada to host this summit. As you have surely realized, this city is proud of its history, which has made it into a unique example of cultural fusion in Europe. The Alhambra might be the most visible trace of this rich past of Granada, Andalucia and Spain, but it is far from being the only one. This place, this city, has truly enriched our culture and our language, and shaped our character in so many ways we still feel today.

Openness towards other people, still defines Granada today. You might have seen many young people around the streets and notice they speak many different foreign languages. That is no wonder, because the University of Granada is constantly at the top of Spanish rankings when it comes to the Erasmus + program, both in terms of students sent abroad and foreign students hosted.

The same can be said of Spain as a whole: we consistently rank among the most popular destinations to study in. We are proud of this status as a European public square, where young minds from all over the continent come to study among their peers, to nurture their curiosity, to discover what they are interested in, to shape themselves as the European citizens they will become.

Europe, perhaps more so than any other continent, is bound to find these places of free thought and discussion. We are a continent with a long common history, also a very complex one, and today still with sometimes-differing national positions and cultural references.

Perhaps the combination of all that history and our diverse views and sensitivities, may also be the very reason why over the last decades we have managed to coalesce and unite around our common values. Around an aspiration for true peace, not based on the force of one actor, but on the free consent of all, large and small. Around an aspiration for true democracy, as the system that best respects our diversity, both within our borders and across our continent.

We are undoubtedly a political community, with shared values, aspirations and interests.

Therefore, here is where the EPC reveals itself as an indispensable tool for all our countries, and that is why Spain has supported its creation from the outset. It provides a forum to meet and discuss the issues that are important to us, so that we may reach common positions and the European voice may be heard on the world stage. It is also a

forum to help us devise continent-wide projects that might further our common prosperity, in areas such as infrastructure or telecommunications... among many others.

Let me end here. I will just conclude by saying that we hope the spirit of Granada –the visual reminder of what diversity and tolerance can bring about when we channel them as an advantage, as a resource– has inspired the talks you have had and will have in the future.

Our best wishes also for the Informal Meeting of Heads of State and Government tomorrow.

Welcome again to this beautiful and magical city. Thank you for honouring us with your presence and enjoy the evening, full of our andalusí flavour.

Muchas gracias.