

# Palabras de Su Majestad el Rey en la cena de gala en honor de Sus Majestades los Reyes

San Antonio. Texas, 17.06.2018

Thank you, Governor Abbott, for your kind words. Also for years for hosting Judge Wolf and the ever bit of the US again Council “Designing America”. And thank you, Mayor Nirenberg, for your warm welcome and for the “Keys of the Missions” that you kindly presented to us this morning at the Palacio del Gobernador; it will be for us a very special symbol of Spanish Governor’s Palace. Your hospitality and of the historic celebration we are so happy to be part of with this visit: the Tricentennial of San Antonio.

The Queen and I feel the same excitement that moves all Spaniards at the sole mention of Texas and especially San Antonio, so close to us in so many ways. Not to mention when they visit —as we are now doing— and encounter all the vivid history that bonds the United States and Spain so intensely, and at such early times since the first steps and encounters in the 16th century.

Nucha more recently, han pasado 31 años desde el viaje de mis padres los Reyes Juan Carlos y Sofía, primeros Reyes de España que visitaron San Antonio. Recuerdan perfectamente sus calles, monumentos y museos, así como la amabilidad y simpatía de tantas personas conocidas en aquella ocasión; recuerdan, por supuesto, la hospitalidad de su anfitrión, el ilustre alcalde entonces, D. Henry Cisneros. Por ello me alegra decirles que traigo el saludo más afectuoso de ambos para quienes les acompañaron durante su estancia.

Y hemos aceptado muy complacidos la invitación de San Antonio. Su Tricentenario es verdaderamente una ocasión irrenunciable para visitar esta querida ciudad, fundada por españoles en un territorio explorado por españoles, y en la que fueron españoles quienes dejaron su lengua, su cultura y su religión, sentando las bases de la organización social y política, de los principios jurídicos y de la economía.

Our visits today to the Governor’s Palace and to the Mission of San Jose Valero and San Miguel de Agayo have literally allowed us to touch a very particular part of history that San Antonio wisely preserves and showcases, understanding the added value that this entails for its present and its future. To quote our Nobel Prize winner for Medicine, Dr. Santiago Ramon y Cajal: “to revere the past is to ennoble the present and to think of the future.”

It is indeed difficult to reach a profound and objective knowledge of History, but it is a worthy endeavour, since it can guide us and help us look ahead into the future. How could we not pay tribute to all those who work towards making Spain’s presence in these lands be known and valued fairly?

Where would our historiography be today without the selfless work of great scholars and writers such as Herbert Bolton, as well Carlos Castañeda and, obviously, Gilberto

Hinojosa and Félix Almaraz, both present here today? I feel the duty to render them our homage; they have been pioneers in a field where they have excelled in their honesty and intellectual reach.

Many things might have changed in the decades passed since the visit of 1987 that I just referred to. Today it seems evident to us that San Antonio has not wasted its time. Its past strengths are always there for us to see and they have also diversified as the city has become more modern and more international.

San Antonio is indeed a welcoming and generous city to all those who came looking for a better future. Among them, Spaniards who followed —centuries later— the first sixteen families from the Canary Islands, ended up representing the essence of this city as its political leaders, mainly professionals and traders.

Not that many of our fellow citizens, thereafter, have established their residence in San Antonio and its surroundings, until more recent times when it seems their numbers are now increasing. Allow me to mention a very special case. How can I not remember tonight one of our national sports heroes, the NBA's San Antonio Spurs center player, Pau Gasol? He cannot be here tonight, but I know he would have liked to join us tonight.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are aware that San Antonio gives a lot of emphasis to education, since its earliest days, and that you enjoy excellent universities here. This is indeed a very farsighted policy, as the future lies in the hands of our youth and they need the appropriate tools to navigate their way in an increasingly complex world.

On our side, tomorrow I will have the opportunity to attend a conference of young Hispanic leaders that have attended visitors programs in Spain in the last few years. We are looking forward to listening to their vision for a future in which Hispanics will be taking more and more public responsibilities in countless areas.

Indeed a historical celebration is what has brought us to San Antonio precisely today, but our visit gazes at the future as well. We would like to encourage and help the further strengthening of our ties in different fields:

In education: with the contribution by many Spanish teachers working in the public education system in different school districts;

In cultural exchanges, such as the magnificent exhibition at the San Antonio Arts Museum of masterpieces by some of the greatest masters of Spanish art along many centuries; which we will visit tomorrow.

In trade, business and cooperation: like the role being played by food industries from Spain and from your city, or the possibilities in hi-tech and scientific sectors like biosciences or cybersecurity, energy... or even between our annual forces.

And in so many other sectors with untapped opportunities that is due time to identify and develop. I encourage you to do so and I am glad to know that the top leaders of some of the major companies from Spain and San Antonio have decided to sit around

the same table tomorrow. I will be very pleased to participate in the meeting that we wish could be a powerful starter for future projects.

We have remembered the historical presence of distinguished Spaniards in San Antonio and we have identified them in different fields. For example in the field of visual arts, with José Arpa y Perea, director of the School of Fine Arts of this city for several years and a landscape artist that paired with his contemporaries, your great Onderdonk, Wood, Gentilz.... We have also found them nowadays in the medical field and we are sincerely glad to be able to mention two illustrious physicians who are also present in this hall: Doctors Alfonso Chiscano and Joaquín Mira. Two men that are not only wise, but also generous, especially towards the Spaniards residing in San Antonio.

We believe that we can also identify countless ancestors among those who built the magnificent churches and irrigation canals of the Missions, and among many missionaries, teachers, ranchers, farmers and entrepreneurs who laid the foundations of the brilliant present before us.

Maybe those anonymous Spaniards inspired your remarkable writer Larry McMurtry in his famous references to San Antonio: "...the one truly lovely City in the state (...) We have never really captured San Antonio, we Texans –somehow the Spanish managed to hold it. (...) San Antonio has kept an ambiance that all the rest of our cities lack (...) San Antonio speaks for itself, and much of its charm is in the way it embodies its past".

Let me just highlight his wise opinion on how important it is to rightly assume and be proud of one's own past. San Antonio really excels at this.

I would like to conclude, Mr Governor, Mr Mayor, County Judge, Ladies and Gentlemen, by thanking you, very dearly, also on behalf of the Queen, for the kind attention and warm hospitality you have offered to us in this truly lovely City.

And in tribute to when we are, and to the cultural culinary and artistic festival that is going on here and to between this month of June and September, allow me to say ¡¡Olé San Antonio!!