

“The challenges facing us are a real crossroads”

Christmas message by King Philip VI

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USPA NEWS - The King of Spain, Philip VI, began his Christmas Eve speech with a memory of the inhabitants of the island of La Palma who have lost everything due to the eruption of the Cumbre Vieja volcano. Also, with a memory of those who died from the pandemic. And made a fiery defense of the constitution in force in Spain.

“This Christmas Eve, I want to direct my first words to the people living on the island of La Palma, who have been going through such a painful and difficult situation over the last three months. The volcano left many of you homeless, without any means of support, and has filled all of us with sadness,” star his speech the King. “Today our heart and thoughts are still with you. We feel very close to you, and you know you have our solidarity, and you can count on the hard work and commitment of every part of Government to help you rebuild your lives and your economy as soon as possible, and restart all your projects with optimism.”

About the pandemic, the Monarch remember that “a year later, although we still need to be very careful, the situation is different. We have made substantial progress in combating the pandemic thanks to the discovery and approval of the vaccines, the great many Spaniards who have been vaccinated, and the vaccination process itself in Spain, which we can feel particularly proud of. Even so, we are seeing that the virus is still capable of doing harm in many ways. Once again it is spreading very fast, and the risk has not disappeared. Quite the reverse. So we must continue being careful, protect ourselves, and acting with the greatest individual and collective responsibility. We all have to do everything we can to hold onto the progress made in this health crisis which has caused so much suffering, and whose victims we remember, specially at these time of year. And once again, we give immense thanks to healthcare personnel, with all our support and encouragement.”

In this matter, said Philip VI, “it is true that in today’s world countries depend on each other more and more, and worldwide solutions are needed for many of the challenges we share, as in the case in healthcare, which demand more effective and stronger international collaboration. We must understand and accept the new transformations that we are experiencing at such high speed, take the initiative and try to get ahead of events; and we must also adapt quickly to changes, while always having a clear view of our major goals and priorities as a country. Because it is also a time of new projects, of new ideas and opportunities; of ambitious initiatives for improvement and progress.”

But the challenges are not easy, said the King: “I sincerely believe that for Spain, as for many other nations, the challenges facing us are a real crossroads; but without doubt, they represent a historic opportunity, even an alarm call for us to catch up with events, to update and modernize our country, while holding firm to our democratic principles and the values that inspire our national cohesion. Because what we do or decide from now on affects whether we can continue to progress alongside the most advanced nations, or if we will fall behind.”

“And in this great task, the institutions have the greatest responsibility. We must always bear in mind the common good and think of the citizens, their concerns and worries; we must always be at their service and attend to their problems. We must be in the place which corresponds to us according to the constitution; each of us must take on the obligations assigned to us, respect and comply with the law, and be an example of public and moral integrity,” he added.

The King of Spain defended democracy: “The very profound changes in Spain in over four decades of democracy and freedom have been extraordinary, and not by chance. They are based on the hard work and sacrifice of many people, of millions of Spaniards. And this is due to many reasons: our sense of history, far-reaching agreements, generosity, responsibility and foresight. This great transformational project is symbolized and represented by our Constitution, which makes us fully part of modern Western democracies, and whose spirit calls us to unity rather than division, to dialogue rather than conflict, to respect instead of rancour, and integrating spirit instead of exclusion; it call us always to a civic, peaceful and free coexistence.”

The Constitution “has been and is the mainstay which has enabled our progress, sustained our democratic cohesion in the face of serious and serious crises of different kinds we have gone through, and for that it deserves our respect, recognition and loyalty,” warned the Monarch. “We must keep moving forward, because history has shown us that we Spaniards can respond to adversity and

overcome it. A future is opening up to us which demands ? of all of us - responsibility, willingness to collaborate and mutual understanding; and that future needs us to have more trust in our own strengths as a Nation."

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