

LEADING BRANDS OF SPAIN FORUM PRESENTATION DINNER NEW YORK,
16 MARCH 2009.

SPEECH BY DR. JOAN MASSAGUÉ

Good evening, Your Royal Highnesses, Minister, Secretary of Estate, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Like Dr. Fuster, I have the pleasure of being invited here tonight by the Leading Brands of Spain Forum as an Honorary Ambassador of the Spain Brands, having being chosen in the same Science and Innovation category in the second promotion of 2007.

It is an honour to take part in this dinner for the presentation of Spanish brands in the complex US market and it gives me great satisfaction to see how Spain has evolved in the last 30 years and how it has grown not only in a political and social sense but also economically and commercially. When I moved to the US in 1979, very few Spanish brands or references to the Spanish culture were available here. Without a doubt in the last few years, the presence of Spanish representatives in the world of sport, cinema, music, painting and literature have contributed to fortify our country's image in the US. This image has also been strengthened by the presence of Spanish brands from practically every sector ranging from fashion to food and drinks, and covering technology, the financial sector and professional services.

However, as science, more specifically Biochemistry, is my field of work, I would like to point out the importance that scientific research has on the image of a country. Any country aspiring to occupy a key position on the international scene cannot do without a team of top scientists and researchers who lead scientific projects that not only contribute to improve life itself and the life expectancy of millions of people but that also improve the global prestige of the country's image.

Spain must be capable of not only retaining its scientists but also attracting others from other countries who can satisfactorily further their career in our country with unsurpassed conditions. Today, I can proudly say that I carry out my professional activity between the two countries, the US and Spain. In the US I run the Department of Cell Biology and Genetics in the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre in New York, where I control the Cancer Biology and Genetics programme. In Spain I am the Deputy Director of the Institute for Research in Biomedicine in Barcelona where research groups – including groups headed by US researchers – carry out key projects on tumour cell proliferation.

As well as being subsidised by the State and the Civil Service, science needs corporate backing. We need to target companies with the approach that they are investing in research projects, which are the basis of technological innovation, a factor that without a doubt is of great relevance to the competitiveness of a country. The business world must sponsor scientific research, in the same way that it sponsors art and cultural events and it invests in social welfare programmes.

These synergies between Spanish scientists, companies and Spanish brands and the Government and Spanish public institutions will contribute to raise Spain's global profile and also to improve the quality of life of society on the whole.

Thank you.