



Press release

At the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Conference on Maritime Transport and Logistics - Suez Canal, hosted in Ismailia, Egypt

Llorca presented Spanish ports as key infrastructure in promoting and developing transport between both shores of the Mediterranean

- Intermodality and improvements in port connectivity will turn the Mediterranean Corridor into an extension of land ports.

08-05-2018 (Ministry of Public Works). The President of Puertos del Estado, José Llorca, represented the Ministry of Public Works at the inaugural Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Conference on Maritime Transport and Logistics - Suez Canal that took place 8-9 May in Ismailia, Egypt. Alongside the president of Puertos del Estado, the event was also attended by Egypt's Prime Minister, Sherif Ismail, the Italian Deputy Minister for Transport, Mario Coletta, and the Egyptian Minister for Transport.

During his participation, the president of Puertos del Estado highlighted Spain's international potential as a maritime and port force, both in terms of the quality of its infrastructure, which is connected to the Mediterranean and Atlantic Corridors, as well as its excellent geostrategic position near one of the world's main sea routes. Developments and improvements are being carried out on the connectivity of Spanish ports such that the Mediterranean Corridor will become an extension of land ports. In this regard, the time saved (4 days in transit, 8 days in line rotation) by a shipping agent headed to northern Europe if it were to operate at a Spanish port in the Mediterranean was used as an example.



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Likewise, Llorca emphasised developments in processes of simplification, digitalisation and the implementation of new technologies in maritime transport in addition to logistics chains, aimed at automation and robotisation; of course, mention was also made of the change in energy model, which is immersed in a process of decarbonisation in favour of the use of liquefied natural gas (LNG). **All of these aspects**, which are being carried out at Spanish port facilities and which affect sustainability and competitiveness in maritime and port transport, **form a part of the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution, which is a strategic priority in the innovation of the Spanish port system.**

Furthermore, he mentioned the launch of the Ministry of Public Works' Internationalisation Plan for Transport and Infrastructure, commenced at the end of 2017, and the recently established Spanish Transport and Infrastructure Observatory as key tools that will favour the international activity of Spanish companies.

In this context, Llorca stated, "**Egypt offers great opportunities for development of the Internationalisation Plan for Transport and Infrastructure, to which private initiative will undoubtedly have much to offer.**" Indeed, he reminded those present that Spanish companies already manage close to 40% of the world's main transport concession contracts. In 2017, Spanish businesses secured international contracts worth €43.5 billion.

Like Spain, *Egypt* is located on one of the main international maritime routes and 60% of the world fleet travels its waters via the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait to the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. The expansion of the Suez Canal is, without a doubt, the greatest piece of news in the Egyptian maritime transport sector.

– THE UfM FORUM FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is a forum for regional cooperation and dialogue that includes among its strategic



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objectives (within the urban transport and development area) promotion of the trans-Mediterranean network and regional projects that contribute to long-term growth and regional integration.

The UfM Forum, created at the Paris Summit in 2008, champions the promotion of stability and peace processes in the Mediterranean region. Among its diverse strategic areas, among others, are business development, transport and urban development, energy and the environment.

It is comprised of 28 Member States of the European Union and 15 countries from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, encompassing more than 750 million citizens from coastal countries on the Mediterranean and the European Union.

The precursor to the UfM is the Barcelona Process, which was launched in 1995 by the Spanish presidency of the European Union as a key to community policy addressing countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean.