

**«Welcome Speech – Gala Dinner» « Spain Investor Day» - 11 Jan 2024**

- Good evening, ladies, and gentlemen. Welcome everyone and thank you for joining today. Thank you, Estudio de Comunicacion, for the great job organising the conference every year.
- You well know that SIX could not agree more with the objective of this event: to promote Spain as an investment destination. This fantastic Palacio de la Bolsa, with so much business and stock market history behind it, is the best place to share this message.
- We invested first-hand with the acquisition of BME some years ago, which has allowed us to become the third largest financial market infrastructure in Europe. Now, as a single company, we work to ensure that companies find the Spanish financial markets the best place to carry out their projects, and to offer the investors a solid, liquid, safe and efficient market with a large international investor base.
- Despite threats such as wars and geopolitical tensions or doubts about economic growth after continued interest rate hikes last year, there are reasons for optimism in 2024. Let me share with you some of them.
- A very good sign is that our pipeline of companies ready to go public is one of the strongest in many years. Of course, everything will depend on market circumstances, but the starting point is encouraging.
- Another reason for optimism is the outlook of financial institutions. According to SIX Future of Finance Study, over three-quarters of senior finance executives globally expect the economic environment to improve over this year. A considerable 64% of companies feel they are strongly positioned for significant growth.
- I am convinced that the financial markets will help companies finance their growth plans. Last year alone, 122 capital increases amounting to 4.7 billion euros were carried out on the Spanish stock exchange.
- Last year, the Spanish stock market once again stood out for shareholder remuneration, which rose by 17% to near 28 billion euros.
- In BME Growth, our SMEs market, ten new companies went public, and we expect to receive soon the first companies in BME Scaleup, the marketplace we launched just a few months ago focused on scaleups. Access to capital markets for SMEs is a very good sign of the dynamism of the Spanish business network.

- Finally, I would like to highlight the Whitepaper that we published yesterday. Under the title “Fostering the Competitiveness of the Spanish Capital Markets”, it proposes a series of measures that we deem necessary. Spain has enormous opportunities to offer to international companies and investors. All measures aimed at strengthening the role of financial markets in their decisive role of channelling financing to companies will undoubtedly be positive for the Spanish economy as a whole. The potential is enormous. It is time for all of us to row in the same direction.
- Thanks and enjoy the dinner.