OPENING SPEECH

JAVIER HERNANI
CEO of BME

Madrid, 25 May 2021
Good morning,

Thank you all for participating in the opening of the seventeenth edition of the MEDCAP Forum, the major meeting point for investors and small and medium-sized Spanish companies. This year we have over 230 investors, half of them international, and more than 100 companies. Joining me today at the opening of this Forum are Fernando Ruiz, Chairman of Deloitte; Pedro Guerrero, Chairman of Bankinter; Juan López-Belmonte, CEO of Laboratorio Rovi; and Santiago de Torres, Chairman of Atrys Health. Gonzalo García Andrés, Secretary of State for the Economy, will be the special guest during the opening. Thank you very much for your presence.

The Forum begins today at a crucial time for companies. Our economy needs to improve its productivity and become more sustainable to consolidate its recovery. And in this process, access to financing is a key factor, especially for smaller companies. Over the last decade the stock markets have made it easier for companies to reduce their dependence on bank credit, and the correction of this imbalance continues to grow.

In the first four months of 2021, flows channeled to equities, including IPOs and capital increases, have already exceeded 18 billion euros, a six-fold increase from the same period in 2020 and equal to the figure for that entire year. Furthermore, New IPO forecasts are also very favorable for the remainder of the year. Three new companies have already been added, two to the main market and another one to BME Growth, and we expect new arrivals in the coming months, which is always good news.

Fixed Income also performed satisfactorily as a generator of recurring financing. In 2020, the debt markets managed by BME channelled 394 billion euros. So far this year, the volume issued already exceeds 165 billion euros, of which more than 50 billion corresponds to corporate debt, a year-on-year increase of 23%.

These figures incorporate the 3.5 billion euros that have been generated in BME’s Fixed Income market, MARF, which recently reached the round figure of 100 issuers.
This market has been a good example of public-private collaboration, as Spanish state-owned bank ICO has guaranteed commercial paper issues from 16 companies in MARF for a total outstanding balance exceeding 2.5 billion euros.

Biotechnology, renewable energy and digitalisation are some of the sectors that can spearhead this recovery, which is so necessary to turn the corner once and for all and overcome the devastation caused by the pandemic. In this process, public-private collaboration is of the essence. Because advances in research, changes in mobility and in work and leisure habits require the intervention of all economic agents, including governments and public administrations, to facilitate the development of companies in a sustainable manner over time.

All of this will be discussed on the panels we have designed for the MedCap Forum, which begins today.

This year, more than 100 companies and 230 investors, nearly half of which are international, are attending this event, and we have received requests for over 1,500 meetings, which will allow company managers to set out their plans for the future.

The market needs visibility, transparency and dissemination, three of the main goals of this Forum since its first edition, in 2005. The MedCap Forum has become a benchmark meeting for the opportunity it offers companies and investors to share knowledge and highlight the enormous potential offered by smaller companies.

We are confident that all of you who take part in it will make the most of these three days to make your expansion plans known -in the case of companies- and to spot opportunities for your clients -in the case of investors-, and I am sure that this will be the case.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the main sponsor of this Forum, Deloitte, and the other institutions that sponsor it: Andbank, Norbolsa, GVC Gaesco, Norgestión, Axesor, Renta 4, World Television and Morningstar. I would also like to thank the collaborators: Instituto BME, CFA Society Spain, IEAF and Atribus, who help make
the event widely known and contribute to the continued success of this Forum among the investment community.

Thank you.