Your Highness, Mr. Minister, Mr. State Secretary, Mr. Vice Chancellor of Universidad Complutense, authorities, dear friends,

My family has asked me to say a few words on their behalf, which I am more than happy to do.

Those who have joined us in previous editions of the Prize may recall that I always ended my speech with a thank you. Today I realise that I was wrong: this Prize is what it is thanks to the warmth of many different people, thanks to the support of many institutions, thanks to so many friends who are still with us today in our project. So, this time, I will begin by thanking you all.

Thanks to His Majesty the King who is once again honouring us with his presence. Sir, we are aware of your tight schedule and that your presence here today is a consequence of the high esteem you had for Jaime, for which we particularly thank you.
Thanks to the Minister of Education, Culture and Sports for joining us once again here and for his unconditional support. Dear Iñigo, I still remember when you lectured in Political Law just a few metres away from here, 35 years ago. What a great satisfaction to have you here today as one of the Ministers of Spain’s Government!

Thanks to our good and old friend Víctor Calvo-Sotelo, State Secretary of Telecommunications, for joining us once again.

My special thanks to Deutsche Bank and its Chairman in Spain, Mr. Antonio Rodriguez Pina, for his sponsorship and enthusiastic support to our project. Antonio: we are at a loss for words: thanks for everything!

Thanks to CUNEF, and to Messrs. Manuel Villa Cellino and Alvaro Cuervo in particular, for supporting this project, for providing comprehensive administrative support and for these magnificent premises.

Thanks to each and every one of the members of the Jury, for their generosity when dedicating their time, valuable opinion and unbeatable advice. I would like to give a very special thanks to the members of our Technical Committee, for their extraordinary dedication and enthusiasm.
Very special thanks to the general secretary of the prize, Ms. Elena López Henares, for being so generous with her time, for her warmth and excellent work.

Thanks to all the researchers who have submitted their work.

Thanks to Bea Oriol and to the entire RPA team for their wonderful organisation and logistics.

Thanks to Bigui Díaz-Agero and the COMCO team, and to my uncle, Tom Burns, for their huge help with the media and broadcasting of the Prize.

Thanks to all my friends who are present in this act today, and to those who, unable to attend, have called to join us in this remembrance, which is invaluable, and who are always present in the Prize events.

Thank you Luisa, for your enthusiasm in organising this new edition of the Prize, and congratulations to my niece, Blanca, for daring to participate as Master of Ceremonies.

And, of course, thanks to my parents for making all of this possible. I am sorry that my mother has been unable to be here, as she is still recovering. She has asked me to give you all her kind regards.
I will not comment on the excellent work presented by today’s winning researchers; Antonio Rodriguez Pina will be in charge, and will do so more professionally and accurately. Samuel, Marcel, Sonia, Gabriel: our warm and heartfelt congratulations, on behalf of the entire Jury.

Beyond the content of the rewarded work itself, this edition of the Prize has invited reflection on my part, which I would like to share with you.
Talent in Spain

In 1921, upon the publication of “Invertebrate Spain”, Ortega stated that “Spain has greater misfortunes than its lack of talent”.¹

Although I am not sure whether this statement was ever true, it is certainly untrue today. Forty-seven of the world’s most renowned researchers are Spanish, according to the 2014 “Highly Cited Researchers’ ranking published by Thomson Reuters. It is also the twelfth country on the list with the most researchers.

As a result, Spain offers the highest quality in many areas of Research, and Economics and Finance are another example. Today, despite fierce competition from international researchers at the world’s best Universities, Including a Nobel Prize in Economics, we are aware of the great work being executed by a team of Spanish researchers in a current topic that is highly relevant.

This is why we are fortunate to count on many talented researchers in Spain, despite the country’s difficulties, as evidenced by the winners of this edition of the Prize.

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Research as the key to individual freedom and the engine of economic growth

In Miguel de Unamuno’s words, “freedom is not a state but a process; one is only free with knowledge, and the greater the knowledge the freer he is”.\(^2\) Other than knowledge, hardly anything is able to free us from injustice and the abuse of power. This is why education, culture and research are links of the same chain, laying the grounds of our individual freedom.

Moreover, research in Finance and Economics, as in other social sciences, is essential to understand the conduct of society, its problems and challenges, in order to help design effective public policies that guarantee social wellbeing.

In current times, where the speed at which events take place demands accessible and immediate information, we must not forget that nothing can replace the value of professional and quality scientific research, constituting the aim of this Prize.

The serious economic crisis we have been suffering since 2008 has affected everybody, including Researchers.

Now, when it seems that there are better times to come, we need to reinforce our commitment to Research, both on the part of public powers and the private sector, where the stake is high. As in other fields where the King executes his exemplary task, there is no better guarantee than the Crown’s commitment and support of Science and researchers.

But, dear friends, this huge relevance should not conceal the fact that research is not an easy adventure, which is why our winners deserve special recognition. The decision to follow the path of a researcher has reminded me of the announcement published by Ernest Shackleton in an attempt to recruit crew members for his famous trip to the Antarctic in 1914 on board the “Endurance”:

“Seeking men for a risky journey. Low salary. Extreme cold. Long periods of darkness. Constant danger. Return alive is not guaranteed, but there will be honour and recognition if successful”

With due respect to obvious differences, academic life is, without a doubt, a “risky journey”. Wages have been, and continue to be, very low. Often, a researcher may “feel cold and bereft”. This journey also demands “long periods of darkness”, confined in libraries, surrounded by papers, working under a desk lamp with a computer, as an inseparable travelling companion. And although
perhaps not returning alive is not a possibility, research activity is, in fact, very risky and often depends on the renewal of scholarships or the granting of a research project in order for the journey to continue.

At the very least, paraphrasing Shackleton’s promise, all researchers deserve honour and recognition; and this is what we intend to offer here today, with the winners, acknowledging the high quality of their work.

To end, allow me to refer to Vaclav Havel: “hope is not the conviction that something will turn out right, but the certainty that something makes sense, irrespective of how it turns out”. We, as the humble sponsors of this Prize, harbour the hope that, with Spain’s talent, if those governing us make the right decisions, we will have a promising future ahead in this extraordinary common project which, certainly, makes a lot of sense: Spain.

Thank you everyone. I look forward to seeing you once again, God willing, at the VII Edition to be held in 2017.

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