

## ÍÑIGO DE LA SERNA: 'A SMART CITY USES TECHNOLOGY AND IS EFFICIENT'

This morning a new edition of Smart City/New City Forum was held at the Hotel Ritz in Madrid, sponsored by Aqualogy. On this occasion, the guest was the Mayor of Santander, Iñigo de la Serna, who was recently elected president of the Spanish Smart Cities Network.

Iñigo de la Serna was introduced by the Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism, José Manuel Soria. The minister, who was mayor of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, presented Iñigo de la Serna as a young politician, but with a remarkable wealth of experience. The minister used the event to announce that 4G telephone networks will become a reality in 2014, a year ahead of schedule.

Iñigo de la Serna began by thanking Aqualogy for the support of such initiatives on the behalf of cities. He said that talk of economic recovery must focus on cities, and in this sense, Spain is on track, as there is no European country with a more determined commitment at municipal level.

The Mayor of Santander outlined three conditions for a city to be considered a smart city: the wise use of technology, management efficiency and job creation policies. In this way, citizens will feel themselves to be part of a common project for the future, which is an intangible asset of the so-called smart city. This requires a paradigm shift, a change in how we view and manage cities, something that goes beyond technological applications and fashions. By way of example, the Mayor stated that the interconnection of city services is a task that has yet to be completed. It is also necessary to strengthen solidarity between cities in order to share experiences working in collaboration. It is unacceptable for each city to start each project from scratch when designing and implementing solutions that tackle the same problem. Experiences must be shared, generating projects that are valid for all, and this is precisely what the Smart Cities Network intends.

Iñigo de la Serna welcomed the political weight being assumed by municipalities in the decisions of the central government, called for the incorporation of universities in public policy and indicated his interest in streamlining the administration's relationship with the private sector. He also fervently declared his support for strengthening relations with citizens, using the possibilities offered by technology. 'We would like every smartphone to become a source of information for the city council,' he said, 'which would allow us to keep a finger on the pulse of the public in real time.'

The Mayor of Santander did not forget to mention the specific issue of his home city. He cited the urban integration of 200,000 square meters of disused docklands. He praised the initiative of the Botín Foundation, which is building a cultural centre with an investment of 80 million euros and an annual budget of 12 million, which will become a huge attraction for the city from 2014. He referred to the holding of the Sailing World Cup in Santander in 2014 and the commitment to improving the cruise tourism offer.

Henry Laiño closed the event on behalf of Aqualogy, which highlighted the group's commitment to improving services to citizens, collaborating with the public sector and implementing integrated and homogeneous services.



