

Madrid awards the city's Medal of Honor to the Ukrainian people

For his heroic example of bravery

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USPA NEWS - "This is not just another San Isidro. After two years in which this city has faced unprecedented challenges, two years of restrictions and hard tests for Madrid and the people of Madrid, our festival can finally be celebrated again with the splendor, joy and smile that we define as people and as a city," said the mayor of Madrid, José Luis Martínez-Almeida, during the celebration in honor of the city's patron, San Isidro. Almeida presented the Ukrainian ambassador to Spain, Serhii Pohoreltsev, with the Medal of Honor awarded by the City Council to his people in recognition "of the heroic example of bravery and love of freedom that the people of Ukraine are giving to the world."

The mayor underlined Madrid's capacity for renewal, a city capable of "transforming the pain of tragedy into the forefront of solidarity. Only a people like Madrid is capable of getting up, overcoming adversity, reaching higher and being better than we were," he added. Likewise, he highlighted "the integrity, solidarity, tenacity and energy" shown by the capital during these two years and also the attitude of the people of Madrid during this time: "After the example of serenity, responsibility and solidarity, the moment of joy has arrived. After the test and the loss, the reunion. After the darkness, finally the light," he stated.

Madrid is a city, according to Almeida, that reiterates its firm commitment to the 1978 Constitution "from the legitimate pride of being the nation's capital and, therefore, as a breakwater for all of Spain, the retaining dam against those who they understand that our coexistence is based on a transfer, which is nothing more than the surrender of our constitutional model, and there they will find the vast majority of Spaniards who want to live together being different." The mayor referred to the present in Madrid as "the best version of what we have ever been," but advanced that the "best is yet to come" and, in this sense, assured that "being a Madrilenian is based on the pride of heterogeneity, of being and thinking differently, that is why there is no collective identity here, but rather the sum of all of us who live in this city."

For her part, Deputy Mayor Begoña Villacís showed her happiness at celebrating San Isidro "without restrictions" again, after two "extremely tough" years in which the absence of celebrations during the pandemic has been a psychological burden that came on top of personal and economic problems" of the people of Madrid. For this reason, she explained that this May 15 has been special because "we hear chotis again in barrel organs, finally we see chulapos with their parpugas and chulapas fly their shawls. In short, Madrid once again enjoys its verbená soul." Villacís highlighted the figure and legacy of the patron saint of the city, "the perfect combination of popular roots, tradition, history, culture and modernity that Madrid represents."

Recognition to the people of Ukraine

The Madrid City Council awarded the city's Medal of Honor to people and entities that stood out over the last year for their contribution to development, coexistence and Madrid values. Among others, Mayor José Luis Martínez-Almeida presented the Ukrainian ambassador to Spain, Serhii Pohoreltsev, with the Medal of Honor awarded by the City Council to his people in recognition "of the heroic example of bravery and love of freedom that the people of Ukraine is giving to the world." This medal is awarded for "the admiration caused by his attitude in the face of adversity," he explained the Mayor. He also expressed, on behalf of the city, the wish that "the violence and the war in Ukraine end, and that this great nation that we feel so close to can join the European Union as soon as possible."

For her part, Deputy Mayor Begoña Villacís expressed her satisfaction at awarding this medal to the Ukrainian people, since "it represents more than anyone the defense of universal values such as freedom, justice or solidarity that are mandatory in any regime that is considered democratic and liberal."

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