

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests to the Mediterranean Forum 2016:

I would like my first and last words before this Forum to be: thank you.

ACE Traductores was founded in 1983, that is 33 years ago already, with the aim of defending the rights of Spanish translators. Throughout these years, its reward has been the battle it has fought in order to increase its public presence, establish its legal status and improve its living conditions as much as possible. In this fight, we have always worked hand in hand with our colleagues from all over Europe, under the umbrella of the European Council of Literary Translators' Associations, as well as with our colleagues from Latin America, with whom we share the same language.

This award that we are receiving today, named after the great humanist Gerard of Cremona, has therefore a double meaning for us: on the one hand, it represents an acknowledgment from the outside of a usually silent work, that is also usually silenced, sustained over time in spite of all the setbacks, in spite of any economic crisis, in spite of the mergers of publishing houses and in spite of the abuse of power by those who possessed the economic power.

But, on the other hand, this award also represents what I would like to highlight today: the fact that we are crossing over to the other side of the Mediterranean. We receive here the recognition of the southern rim, with whom we have always maintained close ties, although not as strong as with the north. We set sail aboard this ship, fueled by prestigious institutions that speak many languages and many cultures, as it could not be any other way when we talk about translation. A ship with strong sails under one name: Words.

Words. Where it all began. That moment of creation when humans became men of dialogue. And, at the same time, due to the proliferation of different languages, dialogue's first obstacle.

We overcome that obstacle, we open the dialogue, that's what we do as translators.

We lay a carpet over the sea and open great tunnels through the mountains. We carry the olive branch that constitutes the fruitful word, and its most powerful derivation: the argument.

For over thirty years, we have put forward arguments at ACE Traductores, always trying to convince through the use of words. There have been many steps forward and also some steps back, but we have never regretted trusting in the most valuable fact we have as human beings: that fellowships promote mutual understanding, that helping hands build friendly ties among nations.

This award proves that we have always been right, and it gives us the necessary strength to continue creating words and breaking down barriers. For this encouragement, here, now and always: thank you.