

Inauguration of the 6th GASNAM Congress

Luca de Meo: “SEAT will develop CNG technology for the Volkswagen Group”

- / **“We must reinforce the infrastructure and assume the challenge among all of us to install 300 gas stations in Spain until 2020”, the President of SEAT emphasised**
- / **When refuelling, Compressed Natural Gas results in a cost savings of 55% compared to petrol and 30% compared to diesel**

Madrid, 11/04/2018.- SEAT President Luca de Meo this morning inaugurated the 6th GASNAM Congress in Madrid, which was also attended by GASNAM President José Ramón Freire; Industry and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises general secretary Begoña Cristeto; and the Portuguese Secretary of State for Energy Jorge Seguro Sanches.

During his keynote speech, Luca de Meo explained the Spanish industry’s ability to innovate and adapt to new challenges, such as mobility in urban centres and the emergence in the use of renewable energies. Precisely on this subject, de Meo affirmed that **“vehicular natural gas has great business potential both for the automotive industry and for the gas industry itself.”**

SEAT has positioned itself as the brand of reference in the Volkswagen Group’s Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) strategy. In this sense, the President of SEAT announced that the SEAT Technical Centre, which employs more than 1,000 engineers, is going to develop CNG technology for the Volkswagen Group, making it a Technology Centre on an international level. **“We want this to be technology made in Spain, we want to be pioneers and are confident we are going to achieve it”,** he said.

De Meo defined this energy as **“a sustainable, profitable alternative to traditional fuels and the electric vehicle.”** In this sense, he pointed out that customers are seeking more range, that recharging can be performed while at work or at home, and that it is quick. **“To sum up, they want the process to be easy and economical.”**

“The good thing about CNG technology is that it already exists”, which means that **“there is no need for major investments and it can be widely offered to customers”,** he said. Its major benefits include refuelling time, which is fast and clean; and that its cost is similar to diesel of petrol powered cars. For this reason, **“CNG is not just a bridge technology, but a real long-term alternative.”**

Speaking before the highest representatives of the gas industry, Luca de Meo underlined that the dual ECO advantage of these vehicles is that they are ECOlogical as well as ECONomical, as the Earth has enough gas reserves to last hundreds of years.

He also indicated that if Spain's vehicle fleet had a million light CNG cars, 1.2 tonnes of CO₂/year would not be released to the atmosphere, or the equivalent of covering Madrid with trees. **“Besides, each driver would benefit from a savings of between 700 and 1,000 euros every year.”**

“These cars, vans or trucks require no further technological development, they're reliable, safe, extraordinarily cost competitive, comfortable and very practical. They have a farther range than other options and their use adapts better to the surroundings than other technologies, either for city driving or medium or long distance commutes”, he underlined.

Luca de Meo also mentioned other advantages such as not being affected by traffic restrictions during bouts of severe pollution, the quick refuelling time, which is estimated at three minutes and is a very economical option, as it represents a cost savings of 55% compared to petrol and 30% compared to diesel.

Regarding the collaboration among entities to develop this technology, the President of SEAT also underscored that the future of CNG involves **“the cooperation of competitors, institutions and other companies in order to create an ecosystem and manage to make CNG an alternative to electrification.”**

“It is vital that we step up investments in gas stations, because it's no use having the technology and the market without the proper infrastructure to respond to customer needs”, de Meo claimed. Furthermore, he also pointed out that SEAT is working with several partners assuming the challenge of making 300 gas stations available in Spain by the year 2020.

SEAT, a benchmark in CNG

SEAT began its commitment to CNG with the launch of the Mii, the Leon TGI and the Ibiza, with the aim of **“becoming the benchmark brand in vehicular mobility with natural gas, biogas and future synthetic fuels”**. In fact, SEAT has Europe's and the Volkswagen Group's broadest portfolio of CNG cars. By the end of 2018, SEAT is also going to adapt the Arona, the world's only CNG SUV.

In Spain, registrations of vehicles fuelled with Compressed Natural Gas have gone up 10 times so far this year, and by 2030 it can be expected that a million gas-powered cars will be seen on Spanish roads and in cities. For SEAT, **“the Spanish market is the second largest in terms of CNG technology, after Italy”**, as shown by the fact that, in the first quarter of 2018, SEAT sold more than 900 gas-powered cars in Spain, nearly as many as in all of 2017.



SEAT is the only company that designs, develops, manufactures and markets cars in Spain. A member of the Volkswagen Group, the multinational has its headquarters in Martorell (Barcelona), exporting 80% of its vehicles, and is present in over 80 countries. In 2017, SEAT obtained an after tax profit of 281 million euros and achieved worldwide sales of nearly 470,000 vehicles.

The SEAT Group employs close to 14,700 professionals and has three production centres – Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Martorell, where it manufactures the highly successful Ibiza, Leon and Arona. Additionally, the company produces the Ateca and the Toledo in the Czech Republic, the Alhambra in Portugal and the Mii in Slovakia.

The multinational has a Technical Centre, which operates as a knowledge hub that brings together 1,000 engineers who are focussed on developing innovation for Spain's largest industrial investor in R&D. SEAT already features the latest connectivity technology in its vehicle range and is currently engaged in the company's global digitalisation process to promote the mobility of the future.

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