

# Spain calls on world to fight against Trump Silicon Valley techno-caste

Pedro Sanchez accuses ultra-Right wing American billionaires of threatening democracy in Europe with their stranglehold on social media

Spain's Left-wing prime minister has called on the world to rebel against the threat to democracy posed by what he called the "Silicon Valley techno-caste".

Speaking on Monday as Donald Trump was sworn in as US president for a second time, Pedro Sanchez accused American tech billionaires of "trying to use their absolute power over social media to control public debate and, therefore, government action, in the entire Western world".

The Spanish leader said it was time for democratic governments to "fight back" against the threats posed by the far-Right and the distortion of debate by a few powerful businessmen in charge of social media platforms.

Mr Sanchez did not specifically name Elon Musk, but his comments about tech moguls' attempts to disrupt democratic systems come after the owner of X took aim at several Western governments, including that of the UK.

He warned about the rise of what he calls the "ultra-Right international" represented by leaders such as Argentina's Javier Milei and Hungary's Viktor Orban, a movement he said was being turbo-charged by social media influence.

“I want to be clear and concise on this, I will say it in less than 280 characters: democracy is not one euro, one vote; it is not one tweet, one vote; it is one person, one vote. Therefore, Europe must stand up to this threat and defend democracy,” Mr Sánchez said.

Mr Musk, the world's richest man, will be in charge of the US Department of Government Efficiency, which is aiming to cut trillions of dollars in federal government spending and slash red tape.



Guests including, from left, Mark Zuckerberg, Lauren Sanchez, Jeff Bezos, Sundar Pichai and Elon Musk attend the Inauguration of Donald Trump in Washington Credit: Getty Images North America

Numerous tech executives who have sought to curry favour with the incoming administration – including Jeff Bezos, the Amazon founder, and Mark Zuckerberg, Meta’s chief executive – had prominent seats on stage during Mr Trump’s inauguration.

Mr Sanchez’s warnings about Mr Musk’s influence come after Emmanuel Macron, the French president, criticised him for endorsing Germany’s far-Right AfD party and calling chancellor Olaf Scholz an “incompetent fool”. Jean-Noel Barrot, the French foreign minister, and members of Mr Sanchez’s Spanish Socialist party have called on the European Union to take action against social media bosses skewing politics in the bloc. On Monday Mr Trump said Spain would face tariffs of 100 per cent on exports to the US as it is a “BRICS country”, referring to the club of nations led by Brazil, Russia, India and China.

Spain is not a BRICS member.

The president had been asked about Spain’s low level of defence spending, something the president has warned Madrid and other Nato members about. He has gone as far to suggest the US could disengage from the military alliance if other members do not increase their spending.

Sebastien Lecornu, France’s defence minister, said on Tuesday that Mr Trump’s election constitutes a “serious kick up the backside” for Europe, which must develop greater autonomy against external military threats.

“Perhaps the brutality of the president’s words can finally lead to a shock and an awakening in European countries, “ Mr Lecornu told France Inter radio, adding: “For many decades there has been the temptation to put ourselves under the American nuclear umbrella.”