

Huawei and 5G battle set to dominate congress

About 100 000 people are expected to traipse through the halls of Mobile World Congress (MWC) in Barcelona this week with foldable phones, 5G and the bitter feud between the US and Huawei expected to be the main talking points. **Legalbrief** reports that the annual event brings together some of the biggest names in the industry, many of whom will be unveiling new mobile devices. After Samsung announced its first foldable smartphone a week ago, **several other firms are expected to introduce their own versions of the technology, including Huawei.** 5G, the new generation of mobile communications that is due to begin rolling out later this year, is also likely to feature heavily in many of the new phones announced at MWC. The technology is predicted to offer data speeds several times that of current-generation 4G, as well as allow for more devices to connect to a network at any one time, carry more data and reduce latency. **Tech Central** reports that companies have spent years highlighting the potential of 5G – from powering autonomous car networks and smart cities to enabling remote surgery and the wider use of robotics.

There's a good reason everyone is focused on Huawei, one of the world's largest makers of telecom equipment. After all, notes **CNN**, it is a key part of China's efforts to advance superfast 5G wireless networks and is now caught in a vicious battle with the US Government. Washington claims that Huawei poses a potential national security threat. Last month, US prosecutors revealed criminal charges against the company, alleging that Huawei stole trade secrets and worked to skirt US sanctions on Iran. Huawei strongly denies the claims and is trying hard to persuade the world to use its 5G technology and not cave to pressure from Washington. **'This is not something that should be decided by politics,'** Huawei's chairman Guo Ping said on Sunday, ahead of the formal start of the congress. Guo said he was hoping 'independent sovereign states' will make 'independent decisions based on their own understanding of the situation and will not just listen to someone else's order.' The US Government is trying to convince its allies to shun Huawei equipment, which it says could be used by the Chinese Government for spying. The company vehemently denies that claim. 'Just because you are from a certain country doesn't mean your equipment is not secure,' Guo said. He added that Huawei must abide by Chinese law and the laws of countries where it operates. The report notes that Huawei is crushing Apple in China, and the US is partly to blame. Europe is one of the battlegrounds, which is why the company isn't shying away from pouring resources into the event. The UK and Germany, two hugely attractive markets for Huawei, are reviewing whether to allow Huawei to be part of their future 5G networks. The countries are weighing the strong warnings coming from Washington against their business interests.

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Huawei would deny any Chinese government request to open up 'back doors' in foreign telecommunications networks because it isn't legally obliged to do so. That's according to company chairman Liang Hua who said the company had received an independent legal opinion about its obligations under Chinese law and **there is nothing forcing companies to create 'back doors' in networks.** He said they had never received any such request, but would refuse it if they did. **Tech Central** reports that the US, New Zealand and Australia have all restricted or banned Huawei from 5G networks, though New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said there has been no final decision. The UK last week said no decision has been made, but that the country 'will not compromise on the improvements we need to see from Huawei'. Germany has ruled out a full Huawei ban.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump has called for mobile networks to ramp up their efforts to deliver faster speeds, demanding that 5G and even 6G be introduced as soon as possible. In a series of tweets, the Trump said he wants American networks to 'win through competition' instead of 'blocking out' more advanced technologies. **Tech Central** reports that Trump's demand for 6G has bewildered some on the social network, given that 5G is only in its infancy and 6G is not a specification that exists yet. **'I want 5G, and even 6G, technology in the United States as soon as possible,'** he tweeted.