

Dear Mr/Ms,

Our two groups, the Association of Catalan Municipalities and Counties (ACM) and the Association of Municipalities for Independence (AMI), represent 98% of Catalan municipalities.

City and town councils, as the public administration closest to citizens, have three duties; to search for solutions to the problems of our society, to fulfil our democratic mandate, and to continue working as one of the principal elements of social cohesion and coexistence in our towns and cities. We Catalan mayors do not only have the same problems and challenges as any other European municipality, but we are also suffering a very serious political situation due to the Spanish government's refusal to allow a referendum on self-determination here.

The results of the Catalan parliamentary elections in 2015 gave a majority of MPs (Members of Parliament) in favour of independence. Furthermore, over 80% of Catalans are in favour of Catalans having the right to decide their own future. Given this situation, on 6 September 2017, the Catalan Parliament passed the law which allows the Catalan government to call a self-determination referendum. They then called this referendum for 1 October this year. Following this decision, over 75% of Catalan town and city mayors signed a political commitment to give support to the holding of this referendum.

The reaction of the Spanish State was immediate. The Spanish Constitutional Court suspended the law and the Spanish Attorney General began summoning the mayors who had signed this commitment to declare before the courts as being under investigation. The Attorney General (or State Prosecutor) also lodged a complaint against the presidents of our two associations of municipalities (ACM and AMI) for possible crimes of disobedience, perversion of justice, and embezzlement of public money.

As democratically elected mayors, we believe that the present political issue in Catalonia should be dealt with via political, democratic, and peaceful ways – giving a voice to citizens to freely decide which future political status they want.

For all this, we want to denounce the police and judicial siege of the democratic institutions of Catalonia and, therefore, of the Catalan people. We want to ask you, as a democratically elected European mayor, to give support to the institutions and people of Catalonia in this struggle for democracy and freedom in front of the totalitarian practices of the Spanish State and the violation of civil rights. We call on you to do whatever you can, both on a local level and a national one, for Europe to react to this violation of the cornerstones of European construction: democracy, freedom, respect, and dignity.

Thank you for your attention

Yours faithfully,

Miquel Buch i Moya
President of the Association
Of Catalan Municipalities

Neus Lloveras i Massana
President of the Association of
Municipalities for Independence