



PRESIDENCIA
DEL GOBIERNO

SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO DE COMUNICACIÓN

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE COMUNICACIÓN

INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENT ON THE SUPREME COURT RULING 14 OCTOBER 2019

(English translation of full statement)

Madrid, October 14th, 2019

14/10/2019

Good morning,

Now that we have heard the ruling handed down by the Supreme Court, I would like to affirm the Spanish Government's absolute respect for and adherence to it.

This ruling marks the conclusion of judicial proceedings that have been carried out with every possible safeguard and with the utmost transparency, as befitting a country such as Spain—a social and democratic state under the rule of law with full separation of powers.

The Spanish Constitution—a modern, rights-based constitution—enshrines freedom, justice, equality and political pluralism among its highest values.

And it does so under a principle that strengthens our democracy: all citizens are equal before the law. Nobody is above the law, and we must all comply with the law.

In a democracy, no one is judged for their ideas or for their political projects, but for crimes defined in Spanish law.

On behalf of the Government, I would like to acknowledge the independent work of the Supreme Court, which has acted with the utmost respect for its obligations. This Court has proven itself to be a model of independence and transparency, safeguards and professionalism; demonstrating yet again the proper functioning of our judiciary.

The Supreme Court ruling is a product of the social and democratic state under the rule of law that the Spanish people established four decades ago by supporting and enacting our Constitution, a text which obtained its greatest social backing in terms of number of votes precisely in Catalonia.

Our Constitution put an end to the Francoist dictatorship. It is thanks to our Constitution that Spain is today one of the world's leading democracies.

Our Constitution sets forth three principles that I would like to underline today:

- Firstly, equality among citizens. Equality before the law, and in the enjoyment of rights and freedoms, wherever they may live.

- Secondly, territorial diversity. Spain's unity is based on the recognition of our rich diversity, which is reflected in the high degree of self-governance of our country's



Autonomous Communities. The level of self-governance in Catalonia, and in all of Spain's Autonomous Communities, is among the highest in the world.

- Thirdly, as in any democratic Constitution in the world, the inviolable nature of our territorial integrity and national sovereignty.

The violation of these three democratic principles underlies the actions that have been penalized by the Supreme Court's ruling.

- Firstly, the rights of the non-independentist social majority of Catalonia have been disregarded and this has given rise to a breakdown in co-existence within Catalan society.

- Secondly, Catalan self-governance is recognized and set forth in the region's Statute of Autonomy, which is enshrined in the Spanish Constitution. And that Statute was trampled on and violated unilaterally by Catalan independentism.

- Thirdly, territorial integrity and the principle of sovereignty were attacked, and with them the rights of all non-independentist Catalans and the rights of all Spaniards.

Now that the Supreme Court ruling has been handed down and published, a new era is opening up.

Over the next few days, the Government of Spain will remain vigilant in its commitment to safeguarding co-existence, security, and respect for democratic legality. We will do so as we have always said we would: with democratic firmness, proportionality, and unity.

Democratic firmness, applying the law.

Proportionality, responding calmly and prudently to any such transgressions as may be committed.

And unity, knowing we can rely on the loyal cooperation of all those political parties and movements committed to the Constitution to respond with a single voice.

Beyond the immediate reaction to the ruling (which will be as diverse as Catalan society—as Spanish society as a whole—is in its leanings), the Government will always contribute to facilitating reconciliation within Catalan society, fractured by independentism.

Catalonia must engage in dialogue with Catalonia. What is now at stake is no longer the territorial integrity of Spain, but co-existence within Catalonia. The Government and Parliament of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia must assume the responsibility of representing all Catalans, of governing for all Catalans, not for an independentist minority. If they assume said responsibility, they will find that the Government of Spain is willing to contribute to the dialogue within a framework of constitutional legality.

Today we are witnessing the conclusion of exemplary judicial proceedings, but we are also hearing confirmation of the shipwreck of a political process that has failed in its attempt to obtain internal support and international recognition. All it leaves in its wake is an unhappy balance of pain and confrontation.

As of today, if we abandon extremisms, we can embark upon a new era in which harmony can prosper once again in Catalonia. An era in which the modern, plural and tolerant Catalonia will play the key role accorded to it—by law and by history—within Spain. An era in which we all jointly contribute to strengthening Europe.

Indeed, I would like to conclude this statement by expressing our commitment to Europe as a shared future; precisely the project in which Catalan society, and Spain as a whole, see themselves reflected.

We are currently facing challenges that demand that sovereignties be shared, not torn into pieces. And Europe is the common area in which we will respond to the challenges of this century.

The transformation of our economy and our societies brought about by the technological revolution; the safeguarding of the social and civil rights that underpin our model of co-existence; the response to climate change... each of these issues has a global dimension and can only be addressed through a supranational project such as the European Union.

At a time when we are calling for a common European defence policy, a single external policy, a common migration policy, a common unemployment insurance scheme, financial integration, tax harmonization, and binding environmental



requirements, among many other things, it makes no sense to venture off in the opposite direction.

In the days ahead we shall bear witness to the last breaths of a dying era. We are all called upon to embark on a new era. An era in which the only possible objective is co-existence within Catalonia. The only method, dialogue. The only rule, the rule of law, the Spanish Constitution.

Thank you very much.