

DIALOGUE ONCE AGAIN MET WITH THREATS OF FORMALLY SUSPENDING CATALAN HOME RULE

Catalonia's President Puigdemont sends a formal letter appealing, once again, for dialogue to Prime Minister Rajoy. Subsequently, Spain's government answers with a communiqué announcing the coming formal suspension of Catalonia's home rule.

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This morning, Catalonia's president had a deadline, imposed by the Spanish government, to withdraw the declaration of independence, whose effects were suspended just after being presented. Puigdemont, therefore, sent a [letter](#)¹ to Spain's Prime Minister early this morning. Catalonia's president, once again, calls for [dialogue](#)² in order to resolve the crisis between the two parts, reminding Rajoy that he had already asked for [a meeting](#)³ to discuss the issue, a petition that had not been answered. "Despite all our efforts and our will for dialogue, the fact that your only answer is suspending our home rule indicates that you do not understand the problem and do not wish to talk," Puigdemont writes. The Catalan president ends the letter by saying that "if the Spanish government persists in hindering dialogue and continues with its repression, the Catalan parliament could, if it deems appropriate, proceed to vote on the formal declaration of independence, which was not voted on 10 October."

The Spanish government answered with a communiqué ten minutes later and a [press conference](#)⁴ by the Spanish government's spokesperson, where the Spanish government announced that President Puigdemont had not responded to their petition. The Spanish government has made clear that they will "proceed with the procedures according to Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution to restore legality in the home rule of Catalonia." The spokesperson also announced that the [Council of Ministers](#)⁵ will hold an extraordinary meeting on Saturday in order to approve the concrete steps to be taken in order to suspend Catalonia's home rule. This will then have to be confirmed by the Spanish Senate, where Prime Minister Rajoy's Popular Party (PP) holds a majority, by the end of next week.

In Catalonia, there is a broad consensus on the fact that the coming suspension of its home rule is an unprecedented escalation of this crisis. Meanwhile, in Madrid some see the measure as a way to hold a snap election in Catalonia, which may offer a new majority. In this respect, many in Barcelona fear that pro-independence parties can be banned before this election is held, as already [insinuated by high-ranking PP officials](#)⁶.

¹ <http://www.cataloniavotes.eu/en/the-reply-letter-from-president-carles-puigdemont-to-the-request-of-the-spanish-govt/>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/18/spain-direct-rule-catalonia-deadline-direct-rule>

³ http://www.catalangovernment.eu/pres_gov/government/en/news/303583/official-statement-president-political-situation-catalonia.html

⁴ <http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/serviciosdeprensa/notasprensa/presidenciadelgobierno/Paginas/2017/191017comunicadogobierno.aspx>

⁵ <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/19/europe/catalonia-independence-spain-crisis/index.html?sr=twCNN101917catalonia-independence-spain-crisis0945AMStory>

⁶ https://politica.elpais.com/politica/2017/10/17/actualidad/1508240396_451064.html