

# DECLARATION OF THE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVES OF CATALONIA\*

To the people of Catalonia and to all the peoples of the world.

Justice and individual and collective human rights, irrevocable foundations which sustain the historical legitimacy and legal and institutional traditions of Catalonia, are the basis of the foundation of the Catalan Republic.

The Catalan nation, its language and culture have a thousand years of history. For centuries, Catalonia has maintained and run its own institutions in complete selfgovernance,

with the Generalitat as the maximum expression of Catalonia's historic rights. Parliamentary process, during the periods of freedom, has been the cornerstone of those institutions, materialised through the Corts Catalanes and crystallized in the Constitutions of Catalonia.

Today Catalonia restores its complete sovereignty, lost and much sought for, after decades of attempting to maintain institutional coexistence, in an honest and loyal manner, with the other peoples of the Iberian Peninsula.

Since the approval of the Spanish Constitution in 1978, Catalan politics has played a key role, displaying an exemplary, loyal and democratic attitude towards Spain, and a deep sense of State.

The Spanish State has answered this loyalty with the refusal to recognise Catalonia as a nation; and allowing a limited and constantly re-centralising autonomy, more administrative than political; with profoundly unjust economic conditions and with cultural and linguistic discrimination.

The Statute of Autonomy, approved by the Catalan Parliament and the Spanish Congress, and in a referendum by the Catalan people, should have been a steady and enduring new framework for bilateral relations between Catalonia and Spain. However, this political agreement was demolished by the Constitutional Court and resulted in new demands from citizens.

Heeding the calls of a large majority of the citizens of Catalonia, the Parliament, the Government of Catalonia and civil society have repeatedly asked for an agreed referendum on self-determination to be held.

In the face of total rejection by Spanish State institutions of all and any negotiation, violating the principles of democracy and autonomy, and ignoring the available legal mechanisms of the Constitution, the Government of Catalonia has called a referendum to exercise the right to self-determination as recognised in international law.

The organisation and carrying out of the referendum has resulted in the suspension of self-government in Catalonia and the application of a de facto state of exception. The brutal military-style police intervention orchestrated by the Spanish State against Catalan citizens repeatedly violated their civil and political liberties and the principles of Human Rights, and contravened international accords signed and ratified by the

Spanish State itself.

Thousands of people, among them hundreds of elected and government officials and professionals in the communications and media sector, the administration and in civil society, have been investigated, detained, charged, interrogated and threatened with lengthy prison sentences.

The Spanish institutions, who should remain neutral, protect fundamental rights and arbitrate in political conflict, have become an instrumental part of these attacks, leaving the Catalan people defenceless.

In spite of the violence and repression used to impede the holding of a peaceful democratic process, the citizens of Catalonia have voted by majority in favour of the foundation of the Catalan Republic.

The founding of the Catalan Republic comes from the necessity to protect the freedom, safety and coexistence of all of the citizens of Catalonia and advance towards a better democracy and rule of law, and responds to the obstruction on the part of the Spanish State to enacting the right of a people's self-determination.

The people of Catalonia stand for legality, and respect for the law is and will be one of the cornerstones of the Republic. The Catalan State will abide by and legally comply with all provisions which make up this declaration and guarantees that the legal certainty and maintenance of subscribed agreements will form part of the foundational spirit of the Catalan Republic.

The founding of the Republic is an outstretched hand as an invitation to dialogue. Honouring the Catalan tradition of seeking pact and agreement, we maintain our commitment to finding accord as the way to resolve political conflict. We reaffirm our fraternal solidarity with the peoples of the world, and especially with those with whom we share a common language and culture and the Euro-Mediterranean region in defence of collective and individual freedoms.

The Catalan Republic is an opportunity to correct current democratic and social deficits, and to build a more prosperous, just, safe and sustainable society in solidarity with others.

By the virtue of all that has been expressed, we, the democratic representatives of the people of Catalonia, in the free exercise of self-determination, and in accordance with the mandate received from the citizens of Catalonia,

CONSTITUTE the Catalan Republic, as an independent, sovereign, democratic, social State under the rule of law.

BRING into force the Law of Transitional Jurisprudence and Foundation of the Republic.

INITIATE the constituting phase, as a democratic, broad, binding and participative citizens' process.

CLAIM the willingness to open negotiations with the Spanish State, without preconditions, in order to establish a collaborative framework for the benefit of both parts. The negotiations must be founded on the equality of both sides.

MAKE IT KNOWN to the international community and the authorities of the European

Union the founding of the Catalan Republic and the proposal for negotiations with the Spanish State.

URGE the international community and the authorities of the European Union to intervene to stop the violation of civil rights and political rights which is in process, and to witness and follow the negotiation process with the Spanish State.

MANIFEST our interest in the construction of a European project to reinforce the social and democratic rights of citizens, along with the commitment to continue applying, without solution of continuity and in a unilateral manner, the legal system of the European Union, and the laws of the Spanish State and Catalan autonomy which transpose its laws.

AFFIRM that Catalonia has the unequivocal willingness to integrate into the international community as quickly as possible. The new State is committed to respecting the international obligations which currently apply in its territory and to continuing its part in the international accords of which the Kingdom of Spain is bound to.

CALL on states and international organisations to recognise the Catalan Republic as an independent and sovereign state.

URGE the Government of Catalonia to adopt the necessary measures to make possible and effective this Declaration of Independence and the provisions of the Law of Transitional Jurisprudence and Foundation of the Republic.

CALL on each and every citizen of the Catalan Republic to join with dignity in the freedom we have awarded ourselves and to construct a State that expresses in action and conduct our collective inspirations.

The legitimate representatives of the people of Catalonia.

Barcelona, 10th October 2017

**\*non official translation**