



STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CATALAN GOVERNMENT ON THE UK REFERENDUM

Barcelona, 24 June 2016

The United Kingdom has decided to leave the EU without the need for the entire European Union to decide or vote. Therefore, this proves that we are perfectly able to decide on the issue of sovereignty just like any other country. I would like to note the importance of the world's fifth largest economy's decision to abandon the European Union and this compels us to think very hard about the European Union as a whole if it is to put an end to its citizen's disaffection. It is necessary that the world's fifth economy and the EU work together from the onset and negotiate; negotiate the agreements to avoid unnecessary damages, specifically in the economic sphere, and, above all, they must negotiate in areas where it is obvious that they must be in agreement, especially in terms of trade.

With this reflection the European Union must necessarily assume, it will have to rethink a number of issues. The first is its approach, an approach that can sometimes be neglectful of the different realities that exist within Europe. There are different voices and different ways of thinking, there is dissatisfaction and, until now, the European Union and EU officials have been insensitive to this diversity. They have also been impervious to the suffering of the middle and working classes who sadly stood by and watched as the EU gradually became a project for the elites, rather than a project for the citizens themselves, citizens who adhered to the European Union with such enthusiasm. The EU should also reflect on its reluctance to de-bureaucratize Brussels, its sluggishness and indecision, as well as its lack of leadership on issues that greatly concern Europe's citizens, and appears to be of little to its officials.

From Catalonia, we want to encourage the European Union to start working immediately to avoid this dissatisfaction and the rise of populist and xenophobic proposals in Europe. In this regard, I want to reaffirm Catalonia's commitment as a long-standing European nation and its willingness to contribute, unequivocally, to the construction of an independent state in a Europe Union that reconnects with its citizens, understands its differences, its different accents and, above all, that protects its people rather than any other particular interest.

Finally, I would also like to send a message of support to the Scottish people. Had Scotland been an independent country now, it would continue to be part of the European Union. In this respect, I would like to reassure the Scottish people who took part in this decision and encourage them in the decisions they may take in the future.