

Statement by the President of the Catalan Government on the Date and Question of the Consultation

Barcelona, 12 December 2013

Good morning all. Firstly, allow me to thank you all for your presence and I would like apologize for the urgency of this press conference. Before getting into much detail, let me explain what this public statement will consist of: First, I will deliver a statement as President of the Government of Catalonia. As you can see, here we have representatives of all the political formations in favour of the Consultation and during the last few days we have discussed how to carry out this Referendum and therefore each one of them will intervene. I will make this first intervention as President, I will then withdraw myself, after which, each representative will give an explanation and, time permitting, will answer any question you may have for them. I say this so that each message can be expressed but also so that you may pose any question with the time frame we have. In the upcoming days there will be more time for more detailed questions.

Having made this introduction regarding the structure of this appearance, I would like to announce that we have an agreement to carry out this Consultation for next year. This agreement has been made with all the political formations you see here.

Obviously, it is an accord which these political parties will have to endorse through their respective government bodies, but we do have this initial agreement to carry out a Referendum in the next year.

This agreement was made swiftly. It was reached in two days and, in my belief, was done well. Not only was it done swiftly and carefully in two days, Tuesday and Wednesday, today being Thursday, but I believe it was well done because it covered the two objectives this Consultation had to have: That is to say, it had to have a strong majority, the proof of which is in front of you. A strong majority of parties in favour of this Consultation, in favour of the right to decide, just as there is a strong majority throughout Catalonia in favour of the right to decide our own political future, as a country. Furthermore, the question is an inclusive one, with an ample majority whilst remaining a clear question with a specific date.

The question which we have agreed on is a single two-part question, both sections being very clear. The first part of the question is the following: 'Do you want Catalonia to become a State?' –State obviously capitalized. 'Yes' or 'No'.

The second part of the question, 'In case of an affirmative answer', so those who have answered the first question "Yes, I want Catalonia to become a State", [the question is:] 'Do you want this State to be independent?', 'Yes or No'. Therefore, I

insist, this is a very inclusive question with a strong majority. We would have liked it for the Catalan Socialist Party (PSC) to be here with us as well, in this very same gothic hall in the Governmental Palace but unfortunately this could not be. Yet we are still an ample majority and therefore we must advance on this path which we have chosen. Very ample, and I insist, very clear.

Any person who wants change the political status will be able to vote and all of those who wish to see a change in the political status with an independent format will also be able to vote. In this way we honour the existing popular demand in accordance with the capacity to express oneself and to express oneself in these terms.

The date, just as with any date, is also very specific: Ninth of November of the year two-thousand and fourteen. Next year. With this date we have fulfilled another commitment. The Consultation was to be carried out in two-thousand and fourteen and so it will be. We have chosen the ninth of November, with the success of the process in mind. By success, I mean the democratic success of this procedure. This way there is time so that the Spanish state, the institutions of the Spanish government, can negotiate with the Catalan institutions the manner in which to carry out this Consultation within the many existing legal frameworks.

We have agreed on the question, which I have read, we have agreed on the date, which I have given, and we have agreed on a procedure which will begin next week in the Parliament of Catalonia. Here, we have agreed on everything. Everything we could agree on. Now we need a Spanish state, which we hope has deep democratic roots, to be aware of the Catalan people's voice, to be aware this parliamentary and political solid majority. A State conscious of a society which wants to decide its own future and one which wants to vote in liberty and in an entirely peaceful way and an entirely democratic manner.

We expect this from the Spanish state and we offer our outstretched hand, with a large majority and clear objectives. We hope, therefore, that in the upcoming months and in the same way this happens in other countries throughout the European Union, that the Spanish state facilitates a way the Catalan people can express their opinion in the ballots and can freely decide their collective future.

Artur Mas Gavarró

129th President of the Government of Catalonia