



El president
de la Generalitat de Catalunya

Mr. Apostolos Tzitzikostas
President of the European Committee of the Regions
Batiment Jacques Delors, Rue Belliard 99/101
1040 Bruxelles / Belgium

Dear President,

In the face of the global coronavirus crisis the government of the Generalitat de Catalunya wants to restate our commitment to the European integration project and contribute to ensure that after this crisis the European Union comes out stronger.

Accordingly, we believe that territorial coordination and cooperation is needed in order to help containment measures be effective, pool all the resources available, meet the medical needs each moment requires, find solutions to Covid-19, and minimize the negative impacts of the crisis, whilst at the same time strengthening the European project. The successful management of this crisis will only be possible if we are capable of ensuring maximum coordination between all levels of governance: local-regional-state-European.

The situation in Catalonia and Europe is extremely worrisome, and the number of Covid-19 infections is increasing exponentially (from 18 to 82 deaths in only 72 hours in Catalonia only). From Catalonia we have faced this public health crisis with concrete and strict measures at both regional and local level in order to control the spread of the virus, ensure the capacity of care of our public health system and monitor its socioeconomic impact. We are coordinating our government's action in the areas of health, civil protection and security so that the measure of confinement of the population and the control of movements are effective. We have also adopted a series of measures to support small businesses and vulnerable people, while at the same time we are carrying out one of the first clinical trials to fight Covid19, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), and we have launched the app Stop Covid19, which helps detect the symptoms of the virus.

Fighting this virus requires full commitment from every level of governance. In this respect, I have requested the Government of Pedro Sánchez to adopt a series of measures that rigorously follow the WHO's recommendations, paying special attention to the most vulnerable people. These include: obligatory home confinement, providing companies with legal and economic coverage from the state in order to interrupt their activity; to completely prohibit entering or exiting Catalonia and other focuses of coronavirus; and to guarantee the supply of Covid-19 prevention material (tests, masks and gloves) to all affected areas. These measures are in line with the recommendations made by experts in the healthcare and scientific community to flatten the contagion curve, and are already being implemented in other European countries. In this regard, please find attached to this letter the document 'Memòria Justificativa Confinament', which justifies our initiatives. We understand the urge to act fast to mitigate what is becoming an uncontrolled evolution of the disease.

That is why, in the face of a global coronavirus crisis, we want to offer our full support and collaboration to strengthen the European Union's position in the world, helping to strengthen its internal reaction and resilience. We are aware that the strength of the European Union and its success over all these years has been the internal market and the stability brought through the process of integration, ensuring more freedom of movement of goods and people throughout the continent and harmonizing policies. Catalonia wants to collaborate to ensure that all essential goods and services reach the people who need them most. As a border region we can and want to play an important role in this sense, in line with the European Commission's guidelines to guarantee the welfare of citizens and ensure the freedom of movement of goods and essential services.

Likewise, as President of the Generalitat de Catalunya, I would like to take this opportunity to ask the European Commission to ensure that WHO guidelines and recommendations are strictly observed by all member states, and that they are implemented respecting the powers and valuing the experiences of each level of governance. In other words, we believe that in order to tackle the current crisis successfully, both the needs and expertise of regions need to be taken into account.

As President of the Generalitat de Catalunya I am available to you and the institution you represent in order to contribute with everything in our power to overcome this crisis whilst at the same time strengthening a European Union closer to its citizens.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Quim Torra i Pla', with a horizontal line above and below the name.

Quim Torra i Pla
President of the Government of Catalonia

Barcelona, 20 March 2020