



## Statement by 131th President of Catalonia

Citizens of Catalonia,

I would like to address myself to you today, as it is only to you and to Catalonia's freedom to whom I owe myself as President.

We are not a country of powerful institutions; we are a dynamic, entrepreneurial, just and free country, blessed with a vibrant civil society. We are a country that never gives up. A country that has seen it all and always emerges alive and stronger, ready to keep moving forward. This is why today, beyond parties, parliaments, authorities or institutions, I want to speak to you.

You are the only hope we have to climb out of this pit where the Spanish state wants to bury us, over and over again. It is your voice and your collective strength that will allow us to escape a labyrinth from which we cannot be free by tunnelling underground. We must instead jump over its walls.

Today I want to address myself to you because some judges, and not the people of Catalonia represented in Parliament, have decided that I can no longer be the President of Catalonia. I want to tell you that no unjust law applied for the purpose of revenge against those who defend human and universal rights will ever be able to

defeat democracy. And I assure you that the irregularities committed to overthrow a new President will be judged in Europe, which is the only place where Catalan pro-independence activists, as well as the just and legitimate cause for independence, can find justice.

Today, it is the courts that are once again interrupting the normal functioning of Catalan institutions and who are taking the Administration, in the midst of a pandemic, towards a provisional situation that this country does not deserve. Their thirst for vengeance is stronger than their respect for the health and lives of our people, or that of their interest in the recovery and survival of our businesses and workers.

Something that characterizes us pro-independence activists is that we are never afraid of voting. We don't mind counting votes as many times as necessary. We want our citizens to always be able to express themselves. We want to achieve our independence, we want to exercise self-determination, but above all we want a democracy of the highest standards for our country. We will have the opportunity to further move in this direction in the upcoming elections, which will be held in the next few months. These need to be a turning point. There must be a new plebiscite and a new mandate to confirm the October 1st referendum.

The decision is clearer than ever. And you have to choose between democracy and freedom, or repression and imposition. A Catalan Republic grounded in civic engagement, or a Spanish Monarchy defined by armed forces and flags.

I am very proud to be on the side of the democrats in this conflict. And I am very proud of the strength and commitment of the vast majority of Catalans.

I accepted the task of presiding over the Generalitat at a time of fierce repression because I committed myself in doing so to my country and to a President, Carles Puigdemont, who had had to seek refuge in exile. And just as I then took charge of the highest Catalan institution, I can tell you that I will continue to work tirelessly for the freedom of Catalonia from any other space from which I can be useful.

I neither give up nor resign myself, much less do I accept this judiciary sentence whose objective is to overthrow the Government of Catalonia. To do so would be to accept the repression against the just cause of Catalan independence. I will take freedom of speech and our cause to Europe. And we will win.

And I take this opportunity to say it clearly, and without qualification. We can make our dream of freedom come true if we are aware of the power that lies within each one of us, and if we pursue this dream together. Catalans, keep advancing. Thank you for doing so. We must keep moving forward, always forward. For Catalonia and for life.