

Political crisis in Spain: Catalan president (CDC) facing prosecution

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Lisbon, Portugal on 20-22 November 2014:

Notes that

- on 9 November large numbers of Catalans turned out to participate in a non-binding vote on Catalonia's political future. The turnout was similar to last May's European Parliament elections. Of a total electorate of 5.4 million, 2,305,290 Catalans chose to exercise their right to an expression of their views on the political future of Catalonia, even though this participatory process has no legal force in Catalonia or in Spain;
- this participatory process and vote organised by the government of Catalonia, with some 40,000 volunteers manning the 1,317 polling stations across Catalonia as well as 19 polling stations for Catalans resident abroad, was chosen after Spain had blocked all other ways of holding a democratic vote on Catalonia's political future;
- the Spanish Parliament had refused a formal request from the Catalan Parliament to hold a self-determination referendum in Catalonia itself, or to delegate temporary powers to the Catalan Parliament to hold such a referendum following the example of the United Kingdom earlier this year;
- the Spanish Government then blocked the holding of a non-binding consultation under Catalan law by referring the Law and the implementing Decree to the Constitutional Court;
- after the vote, the leadership of the ruling party in Spain (People's Party) has announced that public prosecutors will press charges against the president of Catalonia and ALDE party full member CDC, Artur Mas;
- on 11 November President of Catalonia urged once more to Spanish Prime Minister to open negotiations with the aim to find a political solution; and the Spanish Prime Minister reacted on 12 November with another negative answer to this proposal;

Recalls that

- fundamental rights of freedom of expression, freedom of ideology and right to civic manifestation, including those of the Catalan people, cannot be neglected or ignored.

Is concerned about

- charges on president Mas and his government, and **regrets** that some Spanish political parties promote these charges.

Supports

- the proposal of dialogue launched by president Mas to find a political solution to the conflict.