

MEPs urge dialogue in Catalonia crisis

Written by Martin Banks and Julie Levy-Abegnoli on 11 October 2017 in News News

MEPs have been quick to react to Catalan First Minister Carles Puigdemont decision to “pull back from the cliff edge” in an address to the Catalan Parliament Tuesday night.



Demonstration during the appearance of Carles Puigdemont in the Catalan Parliament | *Photo credit: Press Association*

He declared that he would act on what he called a popular mandate to declare independence from Spain but first wanted dialogue with Madrid.

“We have to calm down these tensions and move step by step towards our goal,” he said. “We’re not crazy. We are not trying to fight against democracy. We just wanted to vote.”

He complained that “we [Catalans] were very polite in returning democracy to Spain” after the Franco era, but “Spain didn’t invest in Catalonia or respect the language.”

RELATED CONTENT

- [MEPs condemn events in Catalonia as EU Commission refuses to intervene](#) [1]
 - [MEPs urge all sides to find solution to Catalonia crisis](#) [2]
 - [Jordi Solé: You don't need to be a Catalan separatist to support the referendum on self-determination](#) [3]
 - [Ramon Tremosa i Balcells and Francesc Gambús: Referendum 'proof that Catalonia can no longer be part of Spain'](#) [4]
 - [Josep-Maria Terricabras: Spanish reaction to Catalan referendum 'deeply disappointing'](#) [5]
-

He also noted that 500,000 Catalans were denied a vote on 1 October because of central government raids of polling stations.

Parliament's EPP group leader Manfred Weber said the developments in Catalonia were "very worrying. We strongly appeal for the respect of the rule of law."

He warned, "Unilateral moves can only make things dramatically worse. We urgently call for dialogue on the basis of the Spanish constitution."

His S&D group counterpart Gianni Pittella agreed, saying, "I ask Catalan authorities to return to legality. There cannot be dialogue without respect for the rule of law."

Parliament's Green/EFA group co-Presidents Ska Keller and Philippe Lamberts said, "President Carles Puigdemont opted for an ambiguous statement, leaving some room for dialogue. It is time to use this extra time to urgently promote dialogue. We call on the European Commission to step forward and take immediate action."

They went on, "Dialogue is the only solution to this complex situation. We strongly support the call of Barcelona's Mayor Ada Colau to avoid further escalation of the conflict, promote social cohesion and for immediate talks to begin in Catalonia.

"A lot will depend now on the reaction of the Spanish government. We urge Prime Minister Rajoy to find a political answer to the situation and to refrain from suspending Catalan autonomy or accelerating the criminal prosecution of members of the Catalan parliament and government.

"The possibilities opened by ambiguous declaration of the Catalan President should be used, and we urge all Catalan and Spanish leaders to joint efforts to make that possible."

Josep-Maria Terricabras, a Catalan member of the Greens group, said, "The democratic right of the people of Catalonia to peaceful self-determination must be recognised and respected.

"Now is the time for dialogue between all of the parties concerned. This is now a European issue, and the European Union can and should play its full part in resolving the political differences that exist, taking full account of the democratic rights of the Catalan people.

"We should also recognise the immense dignity of the people of Catalonia, who have exercised their democratic rights entirely peacefully, even in the face of the very worst police brutality and state repression."

Fellow Catalan MEP Jordi Solé said, “We have always been open to dialogue and a negotiated solution. But we temporarily put on hold the effects of independence, waiting for Spain to respond.

“I would appeal to the European Union to recognise, defend and protect the fundamental rights of Catalan citizens, who are of course also EU citizens. This is no longer an internal matter for Spain - it's now time for the European Union to recognise the new political reality and facilitate dialogue between all concerned.”

Speaking on Tuesday, European Council President Donald Tusk called current events as an “extraordinary time for Catalonia and the whole of Spain.”

Tusk said he spoke “as a member of an ethnic minority and a regionalist, as a man who knows what it feels like to be hit by a police baton, and as a former prime minister of a big European country. In brief, as someone who understands and feels the arguments and emotions of all sides.”

He said, “A few days ago, I asked Rajoy to look for a solution to the problem without the use of force. To look for dialogue. Because the force of arguments is always better than the argument of force. Today I ask you to respect - in your intentions - the constitutional order and not to announce a decision that would make such a dialogue impossible.

“Diversity should not, and need not, lead to conflict, whose consequences would obviously be bad: for the Catalans, for Spain and for the whole of Europe. Let us always look for what unites us, and not for what divides us. This is what will decide the future of our continent.”

About the author

Martin Banks is a senior reporter for the Parliament Magazine

Julie Levy-Abegnoli is a journalist for the Parliament Magazine

Tags

[Foreign Affairs](#) [6]

Categories

[International Relations](#) [7]

[Society and welfare](#) [8]



The Parliament Magazine is a Dods Group plc title

Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)

- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [Climate Crisis](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2020](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)
[MonitoringDods](#)
[ResearchDods](#)
[EventsDods](#)
[Training](#)

Media & publishing titles

[Politics HomeThe](#)
[HouseThe](#)
[Parliament](#)
[MagazineHolyrood](#)
[Total PoliticsPublic](#)
[Affairs NewsCivil](#)
[Service](#)
[World](#)
[PublicTechnology](#)
[Training](#)
[JournalDods](#)
[Parliamentary](#)
[CompanionVacher's](#)
[Quarterly The](#)
[European Union and](#)
[Public Affairs](#)
[Directory](#)

Dods events

[Westminster](#)
[BriefingDigital](#)
[Health & Care](#)
[ScotlandMEP](#)
[AwardsThe Skills](#)
[SummitScottish](#)
[Public Service](#)
[AwardsPublic Sector](#)
[Procurement](#)
[SummitPublic](#)
[Sector ICT](#)
[SummitCyber](#)

[Security SummitCyber Security 2017Training Journal Awards](#)

Partnership events

[The Health and Care Innovation ExpoCivil Service LiveCivil Service AwardsChief Nursing Officer for England's SummitWomen into LeadershipThe Youth Justice ConventionSocitm Spring ConferenceNHSCC Annual Members' EventDods at Party Conference](#)

[Privacy PolicyTerms & ConditionsAdvertisingSponsorship Subscriptions](#)

Source URL: <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/meps-urge-dialogue-catalonia-crisis>

Links

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/meps-condemn-events-catalonia-eu-commission-refuses-intervene>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/meps-urge-all-sides-find-solution-catalonia-crisis>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/you-dont-need-be-catalan-separatist-support-referendum-self-determination>
- [4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/referendum-proof-catalonia-can-no-longer-be-part-spain>
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/spanish-reaction-catalan-referendum-deeply-disappointing>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/foreign-affairs>

[7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/international-relations>

[8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/society-and-welfare>