



PARLAMENT DE CATALUNYA

Roger Torrent i Ramió

President

**DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CATALAN PARLIAMENT FOR A UNITED RESPONSE AGAINST THE CURRENT ATTACK ON DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES, AND CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS**

As president of the Catalan Parliament, accompanied by ex-presidents, members of Parliament, ex-members of Parliament and representatives of civil society, all of whom are committed to the defence of Civil and Political Rights, I address the people of Catalonia in light of the seriousness of the current political and democratic situation in our country.

We find ourselves in a context of unprecedented democratic regression. We have recently seen how basic rights have been continuously restricted and violated. We have seen how the police have repressed a referendum, and we have also seen how the Catalan people, who wanted to vote, were violently beaten down.

The surge of violations against basic rights, as perpetrated by the institutions of Spanish State, took yet another sinister turn yesterday - something which is unacceptable to any democrat.

Criminalising legitimate political ideas, and considering the political actions inherent to any democracy as criminal acts, is not justice. It is repression.



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Imprisoning people for their political ideas, and denying freedom to those who do not recant their legitimate ideals, is the final blow against ideological freedom.

These actions violate the civil and political rights that uphold any state that is based on justice and integrity.

The unjust decisions taken by the Spanish courts yesterday represent yet another step backwards; a painfully deliberate and final step within the framework of political repression and the violation of the basic rights that belong to the citizens of this country.

What we suffered, yesterday, was an attack on the heart of our democracy.

As a result, nobody can remain silent or indifferent in the face of this attack. We reach out to everyone who loves democracy, justice, and freedom, irrespective of their political or ideological opinions.

We have political representatives who are in prison and in exile. The Government of the Generalitat has been suspended. Our Parliament has been harassed by the courts, thus preventing it from freely performing its functions, including the main and most essential of all its duties, that of electing the President of the Generalitat.



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By ignoring the separation of powers, attacking the political rights of successive candidates, and in doing so, attacking the political rights of citizens, they have not only forced us to suspend a plenary session or an investiture, they have completely shut down our democracy.

Enough is enough.

They have suspended our democracy, and the only way to save it is through our resolve and unity among all democrats.

I do not want to suggest rhetoric. I propose dignity. I do not ask for lamentations. I demand answers. I urge everyone to form, as of this moment, a united front in defence of democracy and fundamental rights.

A transversal front, based on respect for plurality.

An alliance of all democrats to demand —and achieve— freedom for those who have been persecuted and for that freedom to be put back into the hands of the citizens so that they may decide on the political future of this country. Their imprisonment is unjust. It is unnecessary. It is unthinkable for any democratic country. It is the result of an authoritarian regime.

This is not a battle about flags. Instead, it is one of universal values. And that is why I urge the democrats of Spain, Europe, and those from all over the world, to stand beside



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us. Let them stand with us, as we have stood with them so many times in defence of peace and freedom.

The sensation of helplessness and injustice is overwhelming. But the response, now more than ever, must be civic, pacific, democratic, and universal. And it must be political. We must put politics at the centre. Now is the time for politics.

These are worrying times. But it is precisely in our darkest hour that we must show our resolve, our conviction, our commitment to the people, to democracy, and to our country.

Let all those who see the darkness of our current situation be certain that this country will always continue to move forwards, with dignity, with her head held high.

In spite of the fierce onslaught that we have had to face, I want to share a message of hope. I am absolutely convinced that if we act together, as a society and our institutions, if we are persistent, if we remain strong, if we persevere in defence of democratic principles, we will not only manage to bring these impositions and acts of repression to an end, but we will also be able to aspire -each with their own legitimate political opinions- to construct a country that is better, more just, and truly free.



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We shall hold high the flags of dignity and democracy. We swear to defend the civil and political rights of the people. Together we will build a future of hope and freedom for all.

Long live democracy and long live Catalonia!