

Catalonia has the right to decide about its future

In the previous months, the attention of the whole world, and that of the European Union as well, was captured by Ukraine and Scotland. The events taking place in these two countries have a number of similarities, but a major difference must be noticed: in Scotland, the question regarding the independence of the country was decided –based on an agreement of the interested parties– through a referendum, whereas in Ukraine, violence came to the fore, instead of democratic solutions claiming not only material damages, but human sacrifices as well.

The EU and its member states considered the Scottish solution to be exemplary, while they condemned firmly the violence used in Ukraine, adopting all kind of sanctions against Russia, who –in their opinion– was responsible for the escalation of the conflict.

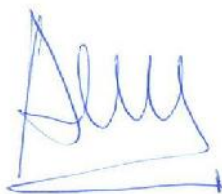
As the 9th of November is approaching, the eyes turn to Catalonia. We regret having to say that it seems that the Spanish government does not follow the Scottish model –when making use of the power of the state–, but instead tries to make it impossible for the Catalan people to decide about their own destiny.

The right to self-determination is a basic human right, this cannot be disputed under no circumstances! If the government from Madrid wishes Catalonia to remain a part of Spain, then it is their duty to create the conditions for that, to convince the Catalan people to stay, through peaceful and democratic means. One thing must be clear: the European way of resolving problems is through dialogue and compromises, by respecting the basic human rights in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

We recall Recommendation 1.881 (2007) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which –noting that "in recent years a considerable number of new states has been created in Europe and we now face the appearance of new nations whose independence and statehood is recognized by the international community"– **states**: "The Assembly insists on the democratic condition of European states, which requires that these situations always be resolved through democratic processes, such as elections, referendums, constitutional and institutional reform, and the establishment of new entities; these processes must be dependent on the participation of citizens, who are ultimately entitled to decide".

In our opinion, this applies not only to Scotland, but also to Catalonia and to all other regions, where the population expresses its will to change the status of the region, regardless whether this is aimed to achieve larger autonomy or independence.

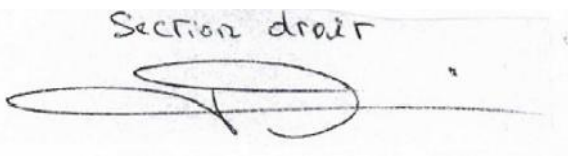
On the 5th of November 2014



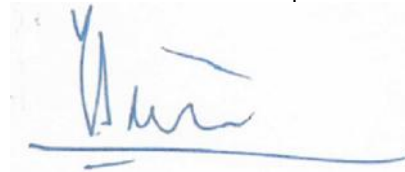
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