

Beat: Politics

## Catalonia begins its disconnection from Spain

### Spanish Government prepares its response

Special report from Barcelona, 09.11.2015, 15:18 Time

**USPA NEWS** - The regional Parliament of Catalonia approved Monday by 72 votes for and 63 against the sovereignty resolution marks the beginning of its disconnection from Spain. The Spanish Government has prepared its response.

As expected, the absolute majority who hold nationalist coalition Junts pel Si and the anti party CUP was enough to approve the resolution for independence. And as expected, the opposition bloc voted against. Although, as spokesman of Junts pel Si, Raul Romeva, said this approval is not a declaration of independence, it does start the process of disconnection from Spain and therefore will be contested by the Spanish Government to the Constitutional Court.

Against this resource, Romeva warned that Monday marked "a before and after for the Catalan Parliament." The Junts pel Si spokesman asserted that "there is no way to stop this. If not today, then tomorrow. If not us, will be others. But it is time to go for it." Romeva said that millions of people live in Catalonia "with great emotion" the independence process.

### Spanish response

The Spanish Government on Monday asked the State Council to prepare a report justifying the legal recourse of the Constitutional Court complaint against the resolution adopted by the Parliament of Catalonia. On Tuesday, Spanish Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, will receive the leader of the Socialist opposition, Pedro Sanchez, who will inform the next steps in resolving this conflict. On Wednesday, the Government will meet to draft the appeal on Thursday at the latest will be presented to the Constitutional Court. If the appeal is declared admissible, the Catalan resolution is automatically suspended for a minimum of five months.

But the response of the Spanish Government will not stand that. Since there is a clear risk of disobedience to the Constitutional Court, Spanish Government sources quoted by the Spanish press speak of three phases. One is economic, with the freezing of the funds the Spanish Government pays the regional Government of Catalonia. The Catalan Executive debit to 300 million Euros to pharmacies in Catalonia and the freezing of the funds it receives from the Spanish Government could mean not having money to pay the salaries of its officials.

The second phase would be legal. The Spanish Government is preparing criminal charges against the Catalans politicians who disobey the rulings of the Constitutional Court. In particular, criminal complaints prepared by disobedience and rebellion against the president of the regional Government of Catalonia, Artur Mas, and against the president of the Catalan Parliament, Carmen Forcadell. These demands could lead them penalties of up to 15 years in prison and 12 of incapacitation.

The third phase is the partial application of Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution, which provides for the suspension of the autonomy of the regions in exceptional cases. In particular, the Ministry of Interior would take control of the Police of the regional Government of Catalonia, the Mossos d'Esquadra. A report by the Spanish Ministry of Interior said that, of the 17,000 agents with the Catalan police, only 300 are separatists. In addition, the functions of judicial Police are exercised by the National Police and Civil Guard, Spanish Government dependent.

The only question is the Government of Mariano Rajoy is when they have to implement these phases. On Monday evening the investiture debate of Artur Mas as president of the regional Government of Catalonia for a new term starts. If the provisions are met, he will not get the required majority to be elected. He would then have to undergo a new vote on Thursday, and if not then elected, would have up to two months - on 9 January 2016 - to reach the necessary agreements that should ensure the investiture or call new elections.

The Spanish Government believes that the Catalan authorities did not give any further steps before having a stable Government, and that should be the Catalan Government to develop the constitutional laws, the Catalan Finance and Social Security, which, according to the text adopted on Monday, have 30 days. That's when the Spanish Government to act criminally against makers of Catalonia and

implement the other measures.

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**Editorial program service of General News Agency:**

United Press Association, Inc.  
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168  
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA  
(702) 943.0321 Local  
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile  
[info@unitedpressassociation.org](mailto:info@unitedpressassociation.org)  
[info@gna24.com](mailto:info@gna24.com)  
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