
Catalans inspired by Scotland vote in independence push

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He is preparing Catalonia for a similar vote in November, with large-scale support for independence from Spain.

Spain's government opposes the Catalan "consultation" vote and is taking the dispute to the Constitutional Court.

Mr Mas said the "No" camp's triumph in Scotland was "not a setback" - having the chance to vote was "the key point".

"This is a powerful and strong message that the UK is sending to the entire world - that if there is such a conflict elsewhere in the world you have the right way to try to resolve these differences. So it is not a setback, it is a very positive message for us and should be for the central institutions in Madrid," he said.

Scotland "has shown the way to others - the Catalan process continues," he added.



Artur Mas says the key principle is the right to vote, not the vote's outcome

The Catalan parliament will meet shortly to adopt a law paving the way for the popular vote.

Mr Mas has promised to hold the vote on 9 November. But the Madrid authorities consider it illegal.

"My main commitment is to... organise the referendum and let the Catalan people vote," Mr Mas said.

"If they think in Madrid that by using legal frameworks they can stop the will of the Catalan people they are wrong."

Spain's Constitutional Court is expected to consider the Catalan case on Tuesday and could suspend the region's vote on independence.

Resentment

Spain's Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy warmly welcomed the Scottish "No" to independence.

"With their decision, the Scottish have avoided the grave economic, social, institutional and political consequences that would have resulted from its separation from the United Kingdom and Europe," he said.

"They chose between integration and segregation, between isolation and openness, between stability and uncertainty, between security and a real risk, and they have chosen the most favourable option for everyone, for them, for the rest of the British citizens and for Europe."

Catalonia is one of Spain's richest and most highly industrialised regions, and also one of the most independent-minded.

Until recently, few Catalans had wanted full independence, but Spain's painful economic crisis has seen a surge in support for separation, correspondents say. There is resentment over the proportion of Catalan taxes used to support poorer regions.

Mr Mas can count on support from 79% of the deputies in Catalonia's parliament, the Spanish news agency Efe reports.

The pro-independence movement in Catalonia believes that once Mr Mas signs the new law the region can go ahead with the independence vote.

Earlier this month hundreds of thousands of Catalans formed a "V" for "vote" along two of Barcelona's main roads calling for their right to vote.
