

Faced to the Spanish State: For a popular constituent process in Catalonia

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This statement was issued by Anticapitalistes, the Fourth Internationalists in Catalonia, members of the Spanish-state-wide section Anticapitalistas on 14 October 2017. “Per un procés constituent popular a Catalunya” [1].

1. In the last weeks we have experienced the greatest mobilizations since the 1978 transition in Catalonia. The dynamics of self-organization generated around the defence of the polling stations, as well as the day of general strike on 3 October have left an organized base that goes beyond the traditional independentist layer. This base made the referendum possible, confronted political and police repression by exerting massive civil disobedience and stopped the country by upholding its sovereignty. It is from this base of self-organized society and with the will to enlarge it that we can face the challenges before us.

2. The response of the regime to the strongest crisis since the transition has been impunity and denial of police brutality, warlike language and repression. A climate that has normalized and stimulated Francoist and fascist manifestations and nostalgia in Catalonia and all over the State. The reactionary turn of the regime as a whole seeks to solve the crisis it has suffered, crushing fundamental rights and freedoms. A turn that attacks the population of Catalonia, but also that of the whole of the Spanish State. A reactionary turn that has found the complicity of Ciudadanos and a disciplined PSOE. The democratic forces of the whole of Spain, with the implication of Catalan sovereignty, must be rearmed by a perspective of constituent processes that respond to the woes of the popular classes, break the isolation of Catalonia and take back the streets and political initiative.

3. The easy independence that the parties of the Government and the pro-independence organizations had promised was exhausted by the events. The political culture of delegation in the Government has made the structures of popular organization to develop in the time of discount. The attempt to dodge the clash with the state with “legal disconnection” or the “law-by-law” approach had deprived sovereignist forces of a profound debate on mass civil disobedience as a tool to move towards the self-determination, its costs and the type of organizational tools and materials necessary to sustain it. At a hurry, the Committees in Defense of the Referendum and other spaces try to prepare for situations where popular solidarity will be key if we want the sovereignist block to overcome fear and material difficulties. Boosting self-organization and coordinating the base spaces must be a priority for anti-capitalism, as well as maintaining unity in action.

4. In recent days, the Spanish government, in conjunction with the great powers of the regime, has threatened the application of 155 and exceptional measures. Capital has also threatened changes in the corporate headquarters of major companies and banks such as Gas Natural, CaixaBank or Banco Sabadell, among others. Six of the 7 “Catalan” companies of the IBEX (the index of the Spanish

Stock Exchange) have applied this measure without practical effects, with the sole intention of making political pressure. The privatizations and externalizations created by the Convergència governments have weakened the public sector to face them. In addition, the lack of planning for a conflict scenario with the oligarchy has led to not implementing mechanisms of self-government and economic control. Mechanisms that would have allowed the development of a public economic fabric that, combined with the social and solidarity economy, to be strong enough to face the threats of economic drowning and to avoid the feeling of anguish of the people. That is, the supposed “state structures” used to silence criticism of the neoliberal policies of the Generalitat have not in practice developed anything since 2012.

5. The silence of the international community, with few exceptions, and in particular the call to return to the constitutional order from the European Union, adds to the obstacles to recognizing the will of the Catalans. Fortress Europe has its own interests in the Spanish State and its capital, as it had with Greek capital facing the will of the Hellenic people expressed in their referendum. Confronted with capital’s Europe, we must seek solidarity from the peoples who suffer from xenophobic and authoritarian attitudes. The desire for Catalan change must be in the centre of the outcome of the crisis favourable to ordinary people and internationalism in Europe. Any transformative attempt needs to break isolation and spread beyond its borders.

6. The Catalan Government decided to suspend the Declaration that stated that “Catalonia will become an independent state in the form of a republic”. As we stated previously, we considered that the results of the referendum, with 43% participation, were legitimate and gave a democratic mandate. A mandate that had to be read intelligently and continue to deepen the 3-O bloc that went far beyond the independists. The problem of the Government’s decision was not dodging a Declaration of Independence that could not be implemented immediately, but it has led to a profound disorientation and disappointment among those who made the 1-O possible. In addition, unlike on 1 and 3 October, the role reserved for the social base of sovereignty was to be mere spectators, we can not allow to return to the offices and opacity. We believe that it was necessary to move forward with a proposal that would maintain the unity of the democratic bloc and did not give in to State repression: to proclaim the Republic and to open a constituent process.

7. A popular and radically democratic constituent process can lead to this situation and give back the initiative to the streets and popular mobilization. A process that constitutes the Catalan Republic, without closing a possible relationship with the other peoples of the State. A political solution that does not send the social base organized around the referendum home, but makes it possible to broaden it further. This needs specific policy towards those popular sectors that have remained distant from the pro-independence and / or have less identification as Catalans. A binding process where we put the flesh on the 1 October decision, to decide the Republic we want. The role of trade unionism and the social movements that foresaw the crackdown on 1 October and proposed the general strike of 3 October as a response will be key. The contributions of feminism and the social and solidarity economy to this constituent power must allow to overwhelm any repressive means of the State and also any attempt to curb the process of self-determination and pact between political elites. Easy independence has come across as a break with the state. We need a constituent process not to write a mere Constitution, but to generate a new institutionality that emanates from the popular self-organization and that is able to guarantee the needs of the popular classes in the conflict against the Spanish State.

Anticapitalistes (Catalonia)

P.S.

* Translation IVP:

<http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article5197>

Footnotes

[1] <http://anticapitalistes.cat/per-un-proces-constituent-popular-a-catalunya/>