

Catalan Leader Fails to Meet Madrid's Deadline

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, October 17, 2017

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

Featured image: *Catalan President Carles Puigdemont*

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stephenlendman.org

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Contact at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

Catalan **President Carles Puigdemont** is more equivocator than decider, failing to formally declare independence from Spain - the overwhelming will of the autonomous region's voters.

Spanish **PM Mariano Rajoy** gave him until 10:00AM Monday local time to say yea or nay on independence, nothing in between.

Instead, Puigdemont in a letter to Rajoy said

"(o)ur proposal of dialogue is sincere and honest. Thus, for the next two months, our main objective is to urge dialogue and that all those international, Spanish and Catalan institutions and personalities who have expressed their will to open a path to negotiations have the chance to explore it."

"My government's priority is to intensively seek the path to dialogue. We want to talk, just as strong democracies do, about the existing problem that the majority of the Catalan people want to continue the path as an independent country in the European framework."

"(W)ith good will, recognizing the problem and looking each other in the face, I am sure we can find a path to the solution."

Spain's **Justice Minister Rafeal Catala** called Puigdemont's response invalid.

Deputy PM Soraya Saenz de Santamaria said

"(t)he government regrets the fact that the President of the Generalitat has decided not to reply to the request formulated by the government last Wednesday."

"It wasn't very difficult to say 'yes' or 'no' to the question of whether he had declared independence."

“I don’t think it was a very complicated answer. All we were and are asking him for is clarity on a very important issue.”

“Prolonging the situation of uncertainty and deliberate confusion only favors those who want to liquidate civic harmony and impose a radical and impoverishing project in Catalonia.”

Puigdemont has until 10:00 AM Thursday, a second deadline Rajoy gave him, to say yea or nay on Catalan independence.

Otherwise, Article 155 of the country’s constitution could be invoked, suspending Catalan autonomy, Puigdemont and other separatist officials removed from office, perhaps arrested and prosecuted for sedition or treason.

New elections could be called to install a new government, subservient to Madrid, how fascist regimes operate.

On Sunday, Belgian **PM Charles Michel** called for “European or international” mediation if dialogue between Catalonia and Madrid fails – breaking from EU consensus.

He failed to say if he’d support Catalan independence if it’s formally declared. Earlier he condemned referendum day violence by national police and civil guards.

On Sunday, he said

“(t)here is a war of nerves on that must be stopped in order to open the way for political dialogue.”

The same day, Puigdemont addressed Catalans publicly, saying he considers the moment “difficult and at the same time hopeful,” rejecting Rajoy’s threat to suspend regional autonomy, adding the attitude of certain Madrid officials is “contemptible.”

He reiterated his “commitment” to “peace and democracy,” rejecting state “violence, aggression and imposition.”

The regional moment of truth was delayed for another 72 hours. Catalans demand independence.

After 16 days since their overwhelming vote, Puigdemont hasn’t formally declared what he’s obligated to do.

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About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

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