

Statement on the events in Catalonia

Under the Spanish Constitution, yesterday's vote in Catalonia was not legal.

For the European Commission, as President Juncker has reiterated repeatedly, this is an internal matter for Spain that has to be dealt with in line with the constitutional order of Spain.

We also reiterate the legal position held by this Commission as well as by its predecessors. If a referendum were to be organised in line with the Spanish Constitution it would mean that the territory leaving would find itself outside of the European Union.

Beyond the purely legal aspects of this matter, the Commission believes that these are times for unity and stability, not divisiveness and fragmentation.

We call on all relevant players to now move very swiftly from confrontation to dialogue. Violence can never be an instrument in politics. We trust the leadership of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy to manage this difficult process in full respect of the Spanish Constitution and of the fundamental rights of citizens enshrined therein.