

# MANIFESTO OF THE NATIONAL PACT FOR A REFERENDUM

The people of Catalonia's feeling of nationhood and their longing for self-government have undeniably deep historical roots, and have repeatedly been manifested throughout history. At the current time, Catalonia is part of Spain, which, for irrefutable historical, linguistic and cultural reasons is plurinational, although this fact is not acknowledged by its political structures.

Catalonia's desire to decide its own political future has become increasingly apparent to the whole world. To the point of becoming a sustained longing, which now reflects the will of the great majority of its people.

The right to decide one's political future is universally recognized as being one of the essential and inalienable rights of democratic societies. It is this right that underlies the demand by a majority of the citizens of Catalonia, who wish to exercise it through the means of a referendum.

We wish to state that the Catalan people's desire to express their will via a referendum is the majority view and cuts across all strata of society; and it is in keeping with the civic, peaceful and democratic determination expressed in the multitudinous demonstrations held by organized society in favour of its right to decide.

We uphold that the current Spanish legal framework, as confirmed by constitutional experts, allows for a referendum to be held in Catalonia in agreement with the state. If this option has not been pursued so far it is due to a lack of political will on behalf of successive Spanish governments. The law, since it is open to multiple interpretations, ought to be understood as an instrument for finding democratic solutions to political problems and not a means to create new ones or exacerbate those that already exist.

The individuals, organizations and institutions that countersign this MANIFESTO view the referendum as a unique instrument for consolidating democracy, for allowing plural political debate, the search for consensus and ultimately the implementation of effective agreements.

Therefore:

We urge the governments of Catalonia and Spain to overcome the political obstacles and their preconceptions, and to finally reach an agreement that establishes the conditions and the fair and necessary guarantees for holding a referendum recognized by the international community, the result of which should be politically binding and effective.

We recognize the Parliament of Catalonia as the democratic institution which expresses the popular will of the country. Therefore, we support any initiatives and agreements that it should make relating to the holding of this referendum.

We express our belief that the referendum is an inclusive tool that will allow the free expression of the different positions that the citizens of Catalonia hold regarding the political relationship between Catalonia and Spain.

We declare that democratic culture demands political solutions to political problems. This is done by appealing to the fundamental mechanism available to contemporary societies: acknowledging and validating the majority will of the people in the form of a vote.

The referendum ought to ensure everyone feels they have been invited to participate. This requires a scrupulously democratic, plural and equal debate between the legitimate options that currently exist in Catalonia.