Beat: Politics

Spanish Justice takes declaration to the Catalan independence movement

The former president may not show up

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USPA NEWS - The dismissed Catalan government and the regional Parliament Bureau are summoned this Thursday and Friday at the National High Court and the Supreme Court, to declare as defendants on the alleged crimes of rebellion, sedition and embezzlement in relation to the declaration of independence of Catalonia. All of them confirmed their appearance before the judge, not so the former president Carles Puigdemont, who traveled to Brussels and could miss his appointment at the Court.

Puigdemont offered a press conference on Tuesday in the Belgian capital, where he again denounced "the violence" of the Spanish Government against the independence, and gave as an example of that violence the accusations of rebellion, sedition and embezzlement, for which he can be condemned to a maximum of 30 years in prison. Previously, the former president of the regional government of Catalonia had hired a Belgian lawyer specialized in immigration and extraditions, who years ago defended terrorists of the Basque criminal organization ETA. This lawyer would have advised Puigdemont not to appear before the judge and ask that he be allowed to testify from Brussels.

According to the former Catalan president, he traveled to Brussels to be able to work "in freedom and with security", since in Spain he could be detained. Puigdemont denied that his trip to the community capital was to request political asylum, a possibility that had been rejected by the Belgian Government. Expert jurists believe that his arrest would be the logical consequence after his flight to Belgium. The Court could issue a European arrest warrant.

Meanwhile, the Constitutional Court temporarily suspended the declaration of independence of Catalonia, when estimating the demand presented by the conservative Government of Mariano Rajoy. The Prime Minister called regional elections in Catalonia for December 21. The independentist parties, except the anti-CUP system coalition, have confirmed that they will participate in those elections. According to several polls published these days in Spanish and Catalan media, the independence movement will lose votes, although it will be able to maintain its majority of seats in the regional Parliament. The great beneficiaries would be the Republicans of the ERC, which would absorb at least a third of the votes obtained by the nationalists of the PdeCAT in the previous elections. The constitutionalist party center Citizens would consolidate as the second political force in Catalonia and the first opposition party.

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