

Barcelona, October 24, 2020

## **Catalonia, a powerhouse for the Union of the XXIst century**

The Catalan National Party (PNC) was founded in June 2020 with the clear vocation of occupying the centre of the Catalan political space, by defending fundamental rights, the Rule of Law, social and economic progress in a market economy and policies based in fairness and equal opportunities. This vocation can only be framed in the long-standing pro-European tradition of the Catalan nationalism of the XIX and XX centuries, and the PNC wants to bring it back to the political debate in Catalonia. The PNC is ready to contribute to the European debates in an active and constructive manner.

### **More Europe**

We firmly believe that Europe's future requires to continue firmly advancing towards a greater European Integration. The European Union is the greatest space of peace, prosperity, welfare, and growth in History. The withdrawal of the United Kingdom through Brexit, together with a growing populist Euroscepticism, can only confirm that the Union needs to continue deepening and developing common policies while advancing in those were the Union has more limited competencies.

The future of Europe, therefore, lays in the consolidation of the internal market, of trade and competition policies and of the Economic and Monetary Union, but also in advancing in European policies in the fields of social affairs, immigration, safety and external action. It also needs a further cession of sovereignty towards the Union in matters such as health and education. The European Union must work in strengthening its tech industry and its logistic networks to compete with China or the United States. The Union portrayed by the European Green Deal, with a clear commitment to renewable energies, must also be a model of democratic welfare.

The path towards a greater European integration must be built closer to citizens and with an even stronger compromise towards them, to ensure that European citizens are both boosters and part of the European project. We therefore advocate for a greater integration under the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity, in which all government levels must be part of the decision-making process and feel a greater ownership in the implementation of common growth policies. The current pandemic context sets a unique opportunity to advance in this direction.

Integration does, in no case, mean centralisation or homogenisation. The European Union is based in the motto "United in diversity". There can be no integration without the recognition of the diversity within the Union, both refereeing to Member States but also to the internal diversity within each one of them.

The Union must respond, therefore, to the multi-level governance of its Member States, engaging with (and taking into account) the expertise of the government levels which are closer to citizens and ensuring the implementation of European policies (i.e., local and regional administrations). It is only logical that they can (and must) participate in their design.

### **Catalonia, a powerhouse from Southern Europe**

Catalonia needs to regain its role as economic and social role in the European integration. During the last decade, our region has lost prestige and influence towards the European Union. Nevertheless, Catalonia can and must be a social and economic motor for the South of Europe.

That is why the PNC advocates for the Catalan Government (the *Generalitat*) to make full use of the competencies established constitutionally by the *Estatut d'Autonomia*). In this sense, Catalonia is fully able to participate in the preparation of the Spanish contributions, specially in those matters in which Catalonia holds exclusive competences. The *Estatut* also enables the *Generalitat* to engage and participate with European institutions and bodies and in the control of the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. Therefore, the *Generalitat* holds adequate tools to contribute to European policies.

Moreover, Catalonia must actively participate in the European reindustrialisation, becoming an innovation and digitalisation pool. Catalonia must restructure its strong industrial network to lead the green and circular economy and must put all instruments it has at the service of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the European Green Deal.

Catalonia must achieve these objectives not only within Spain, by demanding the respect of its constitutional competencies, but also by relaunching the cooperation with the Euroregion Pyrenees Mediterranean, the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and other collaboration structures such as the Four Motors for Europe. Barcelona, as capital of Catalonia and of the Mediterranean Europe, must play a decisive role in a Europe of the cities. We want a Catalonia that weaves a network of regions and a Barcelona that builds a network of cities.

All these objectives are as urgent as ever. The impact of COVID-19 on the Catalan economy will be huge, but the membership to the European Union and the implementation of the recovery plan "Next Generation EU" transform this unprecedented crisis into a unique opportunity for progress and re-development.

Being part in the major European debates (green transition, digitalisation, research, reindustrialisation) is not an option. Catalonia must re-board the European train, a train it should have never left. The European perspective becomes as important as ever in the framework of the social and economic recovery.

### **Catalan, a European language**

Catalan, with over 10 million speakers in 4 European States (3 of them, Member States of the EU), holds a partial recognition by European Institutions. Even if it is recognised in the communication with citizens, by European institutions (thanks to the "Reding's Resolution" of 11 December 1990 and the conclusions of the Council of 13 June 2005), Catalan is still far from becoming official. The PNC engages to work for Catalan to be used in the institutions where it is not still present, as a further recognition of multilingualism in the European Union, but also within Spain.

Further, the PNC believes that it is necessary to further work for the recognition of Occitan language (*aranès* in the Aran Valley) by the European institutions, as European tangible heritage and a token of its linguistic diversity. This would also ensure its preservation and the application of the principles of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, of which Spain is signatory.

**Decidedly catalanist, decidedly pro-European**

Catalanism has always been a genuinely pro-European political movement, which linked Catalan progress to the framework of a Europe increasingly United in its diversity, ever more prosperous and fairer. The PNC, rooted in the best Catalanist tradition, wants to vindicate, and put to practice, this legacy and strongly opposes the eurosceptic tendencies and speeches that have emerged since autumn of 2017 in certain political options or personalities in Catalonia.