

Regarding the Referendum on the Independence of Catalonia

It is hard in Europe today to accept the use of force and even the threat of arms in an attempt to prevent the Catalonians from exercising the natural right to national self-determination.

My experience, as the former President of the Presidency of Slovenia at the time our country decided for independence, beholds me to call for a cessation of the use of force and threats of military intervention. Force does not bring rational decisions. The only way out of the tensions between Madrid and Barcelona is dialogue regarding the fundamental issues that are driving the Catalanian government towards the independence of Catalonia and the exercise of the right to self-determination. Obviously there has not been any such dialogue so far.

We Slovenians exercised our right to self-determination a quarter of a century ago and we cannot deny it to others if they wish to exercise it by democratic and peaceful means.

Difficult negotiations on co-existence await the governments in Madrid and Barcelona regardless of the referendum. I consequently hope that reason and the language of argument will prevail rather than the language of might and force. This must also be in the interests of Europe, its peace and stability.

Milan Kučan, former president of Slovenia

Ljubljana, 28.9.2017

Pred referendumom za samostojnost Katalonije

Težko je v današnji Evropi sprejeti nasilje in celo grožnjo z orožjem, s katerima se skuša prepričati Kataloncem, da uveljavijo naravno pravico naroda do samoodločbe.

Izkušnja, ki jo imam kot nekdanji predsednik predsedstva Slovenije, ko se je ta v okviru Jugoslavije odločala za samostojnost, mi nalaga dolžnost, da pozovem k opustitvi uporabe sile in grožnje z vojaškim posredovanjem. Nasilje ne vodi do razumnih odločitev. Tudi v zaostritvah med Madridom in Barcelono je edina pot le dialog o temeljnih vprašanjih, ki katalonske oblasti silijo na pot v samostojnost Katalonije in uveljavljanja pravice do samoodločbe. Tega dialoga očitno doslej ni bilo.

Slovenci smo svojo pravico do samoodločbe uveljavili pred četrto stoletja in je ne moremo osporavati drugim, če jo želijo uveljaviti po demokratični in mirni poti.

Oblasti v Madridu in Barceloni čakajo zahtevni pogovori o sobivanju, ne glede na referendum. Zato upam, da bosta prevladala razum in govorica argumentov pred govorico moči in nasilja. To mora biti tudi v interesu Evrope, njenega miru in stabilnosti.

Milan Kučan

Ljubljana, 28.9.2017