
SPAIN CONDEMNS 'GENERALIZED VIOLENCE' IN CATALONIA

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Protesters blocked streets, staged sit-ins and clashed with police, in a second day of unrest in the region of Catalonia. The Spanish government condemned the separatists, saying it was "not a peaceful movement."

The Spanish government condemned the clashes that took place during pro-independence protests in Barcelona and other cities in Catalonia, pledging to guarantee security for the region.

In a statement released on Tuesday, the government said "a minority is trying to impose violence in the streets of Catalan cities."

"It is evident that what we're facing is not a peaceful movement, but one orchestrated by groups using street violence to destroy co-existence in Catalonia," the government said.

"This evening's violence (in cities such as Barcelona, Tarragona, Girona and Lerida) was generalized," the statement added.

Catalan separatists were back on the streets on Tuesday, blocking streets and train tracks to protest Spain's jailing of nine of their leaders.

Protesters hurled cans, stones and flares at riot police. They also set garbage containers and cardboard on fire along several streets in Barcelona.

Activists staged sit-ins outside Spanish government offices in a number of Catalan cities, with some 40,000 people taking part in Barcelona and 9,000 in the separatist stronghold of Girona, according to municipal and regional police.

A spokeswoman for the pro-independence Catalan regional government said that separatists were peaceful and that only an isolated group had turned to violence.

"The regional government condemns all violent actions as we always have done," spokeswoman Meritxell Budo told Spanish national broadcaster TVE.

jcg/se (AFP, Reuters)