
SÁNCHEZ PRAISES SPANISH POLICE, AS FAR-RIGHT RISES IN POLLS

- 22.10.2019

EurActiv (22 October 2019)

Spain's caretaker socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has praised the National Police deployment in Catalonia saying it is an example of professionalism and vocation of public service. Meanwhile, the far-right and conservatives are expected to benefit from the violence in Catalonia. EuroEFE reports.

Sánchez's statement came following last week's violent protests in the region, in response to a Supreme Court ruling that sentenced nine Catalan pro-independence politicians to jail for their role in the banned 2017 independence referendum.

During a short visit to Barcelona on Monday, Sánchez said the police forces deployed in Catalonia can guarantee a peaceful coexistence in the prosperous Spanish region (NorthEast), EURACTIV's partner EFE reported.

The crisis is not over

The crisis is not over, we have to persist, we are much more persistent, more stubborn, Sánchez told police officers, according to a video released by the Spanish Government.

A few hours before traveling to Barcelona, Sánchez sent a letter to the Catalan regional president Quim Torra, asking him to explicitly condemn the violence that had erupted after the Supreme Court's sentences and avoid (further) civil disorders.

I have the duty to remind you of the three obligations the head of a government must fulfill if he wants to represent his community with dignity before any partner: expressly condemn the violence, protect the security forces that fight it and avoid civil unrest, Sánchez told Torra, EFE reported.

For his part, Torra sent a letter inviting Sánchez to meet in Barcelona on Monday but the socialist prime minister did not reply.

Conservatives and far-right benefit from crisis?

Three weeks before a fresh general election due on 10 November, a poll for El Mundo conducted right after the Supreme Court's ruling, noted that clashes and violence in Catalonia would mainly

benefit the conservatives of Partido Popular (Popular Party, PP) and the far-right VOX party, while the ruling socialists of PSOE would lose between one to two seats in the Parliament in Madrid.

Centrist liberals of Ciudadanos (Citizens) would suffer a big blow, according to the poll, with 19 seats (38 seats less than in the 28 April election). Leftist Unidas Podemos (United We Can) could also suffer a huge loss and end up with 33 seats (nine less than today).

Meanwhile, the newly founded leftist party Más País (More Country), created by former Unidas Podemos leading member Iñigo Errejón, would capture 4.2% of the votes, and six seats.

PP, Citizens, and Vox have asked Sánchez to intervene and curb secessionist revolts, by invoking Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution, which allows a Spanish prime minister to temporarily suspend an autonomous government, or activate the National Security Law to restore order in Catalonia.

Kaynak/Source: