



ELDH European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights

WITH LAWYERS
IN 22 COUNTRIES

EJDM Europäische Vereinigung von Juristinnen & Juristen für Demokratie und Menschenrechte in der Welt

EJDH Asociación Europea de los Juristas por la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos en el Mundo

EJDH Association Européenne des Juristes pour la Démocratie & les Droits de l'Homme

EGDU Associazione Europea delle Giuriste e dei Giuristi per la Democrazia e i diritti dell'Uomo nel Mondo

Equality Privacy Social Rights
No Racism Peace No Torture No War
Self-Determination of Peoples Democracy
Human Rights Rights of Migrants

Bologna, Donostia, Düsseldorf, Vienna, 30 November 2023

ELDH DECLARATION ON THE AMNESTY BILL IN THE SPANISH PARLIAMENT

The European Lawyers for Democracy and Human Rights (ELDH), with members in 22 European countries, applauds the presentation (following lengthy and complex negotiations) to the Spanish Parliament of an Amnesty Bill which abides by the constitution, and which is supported by the new Spanish coalition government and by an absolute majority of the Spanish Parliament (Congreso). ELDH regards the Amnesty Bill as an important step that makes possible the resolution of the existing political conflicts through dialogue, and democratic and parliamentary processes, rather than through the judicial system.

On October 14, 2019, between 9 and 13 years imprisonment were imposed by the Spanish Supreme Court on the nine Catalan politicians (including Catalan government ministers and the Speaker of the Catalan Parliament) and civil society leaders already in custody for a long period. The trial began February 2019 in Madrid. The former ELDH Co-President, Professor Bill Bowring, and other members of the ELDH Executive Committee observed several hearings of the trial.

Following a trial which ELDH considered to be politically biased, the Court handed out sentences for the crimes of sedition, embezzlement of public funds, and disobedience, in the context of the 1 October 2017 referendum on Catalan independence. ELDH recalls that the referendum was a non-violent act of civil disobedience (considered illegal by the Spanish authorities), organised peacefully to allow the voices of the citizens of Catalonia to be heard.

In this context a campaign for an Amnesty Law was initiated to create an environment in which pro independence politicians would not be under threat, and a political solution to bring an end to the deepening of the political conflict could be found. The Amnesty Law would cover those sentenced or pending trial including those in exile. ELDH has supported the Amnesty campaign in favour of such a Bill, so to promote the conditions for a more positive debate on the democratic solution of the political conflict.

ELDH's statement dated 4 February 2021 on the issue can be accessed here:

<https://eldh.eu/en/2021/02/convicted-catalan-politicians-political-solution-necessary/>

ELDH will continue to follow the developments regarding this Bill and support the resolution of political conflicts through democratic processes, rather than through the judicial system.

European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights (ELDH)

Co-President*: Urko Aiertza (lawyer), Donostia, Basque Country

Co-President: Barbara Spinelli (lawyer) Bologna

Co-Secretary General: Thomas Schmidt (lawyer), Düsseldorf | E-Mail: Thomas.schmidt@eldh.eu | Phone +49 (0)172 68 10 888

Co-Secretary General: Serife Ceren Uysal (lawyer), Vienna | E-Mail: serifecerenuysal@gmail.com | Phone +43 664 4853347

Postal address: ELDH | Thomas Schmidt | Platanenstrasse 13 | D – 40233 Düsseldorf (Germany)

Website: www.eldh.eu