

**Question for written answer E-001376/2017/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Mara Bizzotto (ENF)

Subject: Right to self-determination of peoples: referendum on Catalan independence and Spain's opposition to it

In October 2016, the Catalan Parliament adopted resolutions calling for a referendum on Catalonia's secession from Spain to be held by September 2017.

Spain's constitutional court, in response to an application by the Spanish Government, declared the Catalan resolutions unconstitutional, forbidding the authorities in Barcelona from calling the vote and threatening them with criminal penalties.

Over the last few years, the Catalan Parliament has repeatedly offered to negotiate the terms and conditions of the independence referendum with Madrid, but the Spanish authorities have always declined. Against the wishes of Madrid, an advisory referendum on Catalan independence was held on 9 November 2014, with a turnout of 2.3 million people, 80% of whom voted in favour.

In spite of the Spanish diktats, the Catalan President Puigdemont intends to hold the referendum in 2017.

Also in the light of its answer to question E-007453/2012, in which it states that in the hypothetical event of a secession of a part of an EU Member State, the solution would have to be found and negotiated within the international legal order, does the Commission not agree that the EU treaties and other international treaties are preventing Catalonia from calling a free and democratic referendum to allow Catalan citizens to exercise their inherent right to self-determination, which is also provided for in the UN Charter?

Should it not take action – and if so, how – to safeguard the rights of Catalan citizens and institutions which, as President Puigdemont told the European Parliament, want to exercise their right to self-determination and remain in the EU?