

## Spain celebrates its Constitution Day under the threat of independence

### Without public and without the King

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**USPA NEWS** - Spain celebrated its Constitution Day this Sunday. 42 years have passed since the Spaniards, in a referendum, approved the supreme rule of their legal system, which today is threatened with death by the pro-independence parties, federalist socialism and a weak government that is more interested in keeping their seats than in defending the general interest. For the first time - also motivated by the pandemic that still plagues Spain - institutional events were held without the public, without the assistance of King Felipe VI and without the support of a good number of regional presidents and parties represented in Parliament.

The Congress of Deputies commemorated Constitution Day this Sunday, December 6, with an institutional act that on this 42nd anniversary was held in the Carrera de San Jerónimo, where the headquarters of the Parliament is located, with the presence of representatives of the high institutions of the State and a reduced number of guests, due to the health emergency caused by COVID-19. The president of the Congress, Meritxell Batet, gave a speech on the steps of the Puerta de los Leones, accompanied by the president of the Spanish Government, Pedro Sánchez, the president of the Senate, Pilar Llop, the Board and parliamentary spokespersons of both chambers, members of the Government and the presidents of the Constitutional Court, Juan José González Rivas, and of the General Council of the Judiciary, Carlos Lesmes.

Representatives of other institutions such as the Ombudsman, the Court of Accounts, the State Attorney General's Office and the Council of State, several presidents of autonomous communities and cities, and the mayor of Madrid also attended the event; the president of the first opposition party - the conservative Popular Party -, deputies and senators, former presidents of the Government and of Congress and the Senate, constitutional speakers and a representation of social agents and civil society, including representatives of the health groups and social entities that fight against the pandemic and its effects.

Despite the delicate moment that Spanish constitutionalism is going through, the political leaders attending the events made an effort to reduce tension and highlight the values of the 1978 Constitution. "They are 42 years of peace, coexistence, and freedom. And we owe it to our Constitution, the greatest success in our collective history. On Constitution Day we celebrate the understanding that made it possible yesterday and that today should guide us towards the future," wrote the President of the Spanish Government, Pedro Sánchez, on Twitter hours before the start of the institutional events.

The events began with the raising of the Spanish flag in the Discovery Gardens, near the Congress of Deputies, where the statue of Christopher Columbus commemorates the feat of the Discovery of America. The president of Congress, Meritxell Batet, and the president of the Senate, Pilar Llop, led the political delegation together with senior military officials. The raised flag weighs 35 kilos and is the largest that flies in Spain.

### No audience

The events were held without an audience. Nor, during the previous days, have the doors of the Congress of Deputies been opened for Spaniards to visit the seat of the legislative power. The Congress of Deputies Open Doors that are organized every year in the week of the Constitution are this year virtual, since the Puerta de los Leones cannot be opened to citizens due to the health emergency. In what would be its 24th edition, each user can enter the Palace on a personalized guided tour in augmented reality.

A new virtual visit allows from this Sunday, Constitution Day, to take an individualized tour of the rooms that are covered during the Open Doors, in which each user can move freely around the Palace, observe the environment in 360 degrees, approach and contemplate even the smallest detail of each room, find information about each of the paintings, sculptures and decorative works that make up the artistic heritage of the Congress and listen to the explanations provided by your virtual guide.

The visit can also be carried out in augmented reality with VR devices and is accessible for people with disabilities. The use of VR glasses allows users with movement limitations to move around the rooms and navigate through all the elements that provide additional information, fixing their gaze on the point they want to access. Accessibility has been one of the priorities when addressing

the structure and design of this new web page, in which the colors have been modified in order to guarantee maximum contrast, so that reading is easier for people with visual disability. The website has been developed taking into account the Accessibility Guidelines or General Principles of Accessible Design.

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