

JCC Catalan Secession: Spanish Cabinet

Thomas Jefferson Model United Nations Conference

TechMUN XXVI



High School Joint Crisis Committee

Director: Niharika Vattikonda

Co-Chair: Jeremy Krill

Co-Chair: Anshu Sharma

TechMUN | | Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and
Technology | | April 20-21, 2018



Letter from the Director

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to TechMUN 2018! My name is Niharika Vattikonda, and I will be your crisis director for the Catalan Secession Joint Crisis Committee. I'm excited to see committee take action on both of our fascinating topics and interacting with the Catalan Independence Front as well. I'm a senior at TJ and have been a part of TJMUN for four years now. Outside of MUN, I serve on the Fairfax County School Board as the Student Representative, direct Coding Lady Colonials, and organize HackTJ. In my free time, I most likely writing or binge-watching political dramas.

For those of you who are new to crisis, unlike your chairs, I will not be serving on the dais, but rather I will be creating crises for committee to solve and responding to your directives behind the scenes. In both public and private directives, I will be looking for creative solutions that may not have been implemented in the real world but are still grounded in what is politically feasible. For individual delegates' private directives, I hope to see well thought-out arcs that adapt to the changing crisis environment and ultimately promote your own interests in committee. Good luck in your research and I look forward to seeing you in April!

If you have any questions about committee, crisis, or MUN in general, please send us an email at spanishtechmun2018@gmail.com.

Best wishes,

Niharika



Letter from Chairs

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Spanish Cabinet committee of the Catalan Secession Joint Crisis Committee (JCC). TechMUN does not feature many committees like this, so we work hard to do justice to the ones we do have. We hope you learn a lot while preparing for this committee, and are ready to put that knowledge to action. After all, this is a JCC, where action is in no short supply!

As you probably already know, MUN is quite challenging, but very rewarding. As you work, don't forget, we on committee staff are here to help you. Please don't hesitate to contact us via email at spanishtechmun2018@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you in committee.

Good luck, and Get Excited!

Anshu Sharma

Delegates,

Welcome to the Spanish Cabinet! With the Catalan people voting to separate from Spain in October 2017, the region is currently in a state of turmoil, and even a small misstep from either side of this JCC could tip the scales dramatically. Expect a challenging but entertaining committee where you'll apply your knowledge and portfolio powers accordingly to ensure the success of the Kingdom of Spain in this crisis.

As your chairs for this committee, Anshu and I will do our best to help this committee run as smoothly as possible. We want to make sure that everyone is prepared to the best of their abilities, so we'll be available for questions at spanishtechmun2018@gmail.com for anything



regarding specifics about the committee, research, and crisis committees in general. We can't wait to see you in April!

Sincerely,

Jeremy Krill





Guide to Crisis Committees

Crisis is a form of Model United Nations in which delegates represent members of small councils, boards, and committees rather than large Assemblies. Typical parliamentary procedure is given flexibility to accommodate for the unique fast-paced debate in which crisis delegates partake. Crisis committees receive “crisis updates” presenting issues to be discussed, and delegates follow by quickly drafting and voting on punctual and effective “public directives” meant to deal with the update. For example, a United Nations Security Council committee may receive an update about an oil spill in the South China Sea, and public directives drafted by delegates might contain measures to reroute trade in the region. Simultaneously, delegates use the unique personal powers of their position to take private action in “private directives,” which are submitted to the crisis staff who then include private actions in their updates. The oil spill may have been caused, for example, by the US in a secret effort to disrupt Chinese trade routes, hashed out in a detailed private directive approved by crisis staff. Be sure to check out the MUN 101 section on the TechMUN website for more information on the structure of crisis committees.

TechMUN will use the double notepad system for private directives, in which delegates are given two large legal notepads at the beginning of committee. Rather than tearing off private directives, delegates will submit notepads with their directives attached, always keeping one notepad with them to write while their other is being processed by staff. Delegates will be able to review their own submission history through their intact notepads. In addition to the two large legal pads, small notepads will be distributed for in-committee use, including writing public directives. Crisis Chairs and Directors look forward to seeing delegates’ private schemes and public solutions at TechMUN 2018!

*Background and History*

Catalonia is located in northeastern Spain, along the edge of the Iberian Peninsula, and composed of four distinct provinces: Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona. Historically, the Principality of Catalonia started off as a geographical territory rather than a political one. However, in 12th century, it joined the Kingdom of Aragon to create the Crown of Aragon. Despite unification, Aragon and Catalonia remained legally and politically separate, a trend of regional independence and autonomy that defines Catalonia throughout its history.¹

The resolve and persistence shown by the Catalan government during The Catalan Revolt of the 1640s, the fall of Barcelona in 1714, and the Napoleonic and Carlist Wars solidified a strong sense of nationalism throughout the region. The economy began booming during the early 20th century because Catalonia's support of proto-industrialization and national protectionist laws. But in 1936, tensions between the Nationalist and Republican parties erupted into the Spanish Civil War. The Republicans, including Catalonia, were defeated in 1939, putting Spain into the hands of Francisco Franco, an oppressive dictator.²

Reconstruction after the war was hard, and not only economically. Under Franco, all cultural, political, and linguistic diversity was prohibited. In Catalonia, this meant the dismantling of the regional government, mass media, and age old cultural traditions.³ Despite these hardships, Barcelona became one of the largest industrial cities in Europe. After Franco's death, Catalonia rebuilt its largely autonomous regional government. The ideals of independence have only strengthened in the region over the past few decades. In 2006, the Statue of Autonomy was

¹ Rodriguez, Vicente. "Catalonia: Geography, Independence Movement, & History." Encyclopedia Britannica. N.p., 2018. Web. 1 Mar. 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Catalonia>

² Payne, Stanley G. *Fascism In Spain, 1923-1977*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000. Print. 1 Mar. 2018.

³ Ross, Marc Howard. *Cultural Contestation In Ethnic Conflict*. Leiden: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Print. 1 Mar. 2018.



agreed on by both the Spanish and Catalan governments to ensure Catalonia's political and trade rights within Spain. The modern day Catalan independence movement arose in 2010 after the Constitutional Court of Spain declared that the Statue of Autonomy was unconstitutional.⁴ The movement is based on Catalan nationalistic values and aims to secede from Spain to create its own independent state.

Starting Point: This committee will begin on Oct. 2nd, 2017, immediately after the referendum.



⁴ Bausells, Marta. "Un Milió I Mig De Manifestants Per La Independència De Catalunya." ARA. N.p., 2018. Web. 1 Mar. 2018. https://www.ara.cat/especials/gentada-centre-Barcelona-mitja-manifestacio_0_772122901.html



Topic 1: Responding to the Catalan Public

On October 1st, 2017, the Catalan government held an illegal referendum on whether or not Catalonia should secede from the rest of Spain. The Spanish police attempted to prevent this referendum from happening, but the vote happened in several precincts anyway, and was overwhelmingly in favor of secession with over 90% of votes being recorded in support of Catalan independence from Spain.



However, this referendum, as well as its outcome, are not spontaneous. Ever since 2010, when a Spanish Court struck down a 2006 law granting Catalonia greater autonomy, separatists have been pushing for greater autonomy.⁵ In 2014, a non-binding vote, also held in defiance of Spanish law, showed 80% of voters backed a split from Spain.⁶

The polls, because of differences in turnout rates among different segments of the population, may not necessarily be wholly indicative of Catalan public opinion. The turnout for the election was around 42 percent of the electorate.⁷ Opinion polls prior to the election showed support for independence hovering at 50 percent or below.^{8,9}

There is not just one reason the Catalan referendum went the way it did. As noted in the background section, Catalonia has long had and maintained a cultural identity unique from the rest of Spain. The police action on October 1st did not foster any sense of unity among the

⁵ BBC, "Catalonia's bid for independence from Spain explained"

⁶ Bloomberg, "Spanish Police Storm Polling Stations to Block Catalan Vote"

⁷ CNN, "Catalonia referendum result plunges Spain into political crisis"

⁸ The Telegraph, "Tensions grow in Spain as Catalonia independence referendum confirmed"

⁹ New York Times, "Catalans, Elated but Fearful, Brace for Independence Vote"



Catalonian people either. This leaves the Spanish government with few good choices regarding steps forward. Reacting more harshly with an increased police presence may generate more domestic and international support for the Catalan independence movement, but reacting too gently may embolden the independence movement further and discourage the rule of law.

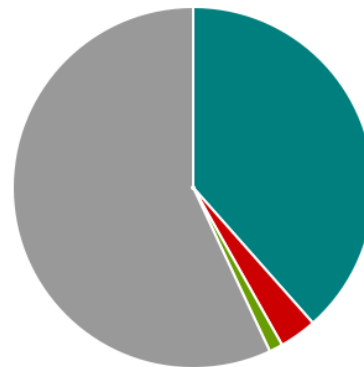
A possible solution will have to take into account long term security and political arrangements with Catalonia. Such arrangements can be enacted via legislation passed by the Spanish and Catalan parliaments, constitutional amendments, and security agreements between Catalan and Spanish security forces.

There are also financial motivations behind the support for independence. Currently, the region pays more to the Spanish government than it receives.¹⁰ Some Catalonians feel that Catalonia would be better off collecting that revenue for itself. Whether or not that is true

is debatable, but what is less contentious is that Catalonia is currently a major part of the Spanish

Result of Catalan referendum 1 October 2017

■ Voted for independence
■ Voted against independence
■ Blank/spoiled ballots
■ Didn't vote



Catalan Government figures

BBC





economy. Catalonia currently includes 16 percent of the Spanish population but produces 19 percent of Spain's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 25.6 percent of its exports, and draws in 20.7 percent of its foreign investments.¹⁰ Consequently, Catalonia leaving Spain would have a devastating effect on the Spanish economy, even when ignoring the political aftershocks.

Deserving special consideration are the youth of Catalonia, a significant bloc in securing support for the 2017 referendum and for previous pro-independence actions.^{11,12} Because they are young, they may not remember the rule of General Franco, but they may not be so attached to Spanish rule either, and they will be particularly cognizant to economic conditions. Any practical solution to ending the crisis must attract the youth of Catalonia as well.

Therefore, possible resolutions to the Catalanian crisis should consider financial incentives as well. These could include delegating greater taxation authority to the Catalan government, promising greater funds to Catalonia, or offering tax breaks to those living in Catalonia. However, such offers must be made carefully so as not to further jeopardize the economic and financial health of Spain.

Questions to Consider

1. To what extent should the Spanish government rely on police to maintain order in Catalonia? And is a police presence sustainable in the long term?
2. Should the Spanish government offer economic incentives to Catalonia to gain public support for unity? If so, what incentives should be offered?

¹⁰ BBC, "Catalonia crisis in 300 words"

¹¹ Washington Post, "In Catalonia's independence vote, students want their say"

¹² Reuters, "Immigrants and youth drive Catalan independence movement"



3. Is it possible for the Spanish Cabinet and the Catalan Independence Front to achieve an agreement regarding Catalonia's current status and autonomous powers?
4. How do the Scottish Independence Referendum, Brexit, and other similar phenomena around the world influence the perception of the Catalan independence movement?

Helpful Links

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<https://www.ft.com/content/138164a6-5b8a-11e7-b553-e2df1b0c3220>

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Topic 2: Dealing with Catalan Leadership

Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has pointed out how the rule of law must prevail over the Catalan Independence Front's clearly illegal efforts to hold an independence referendum, and



the violence resulting from a police crackdown at referendum polling stations has been blamed on Catalonia's decision to move forward with an illegal referendum. Deputy Prime Minister Saenz de Santamaria has publicly stated that "The referendum couldn't be held, and it's not been held. To carry on

with this farce makes no sense, it doesn't lead anywhere," emphasizing the Spanish government's view that Catalonia's unconstitutional referendum was pointless in that it will not help them achieve their goals of greater autonomy.¹³ Given the results of this referendum, this committee will need to consider how Spain will react to the Catalan Independence Front's clearly unconstitutional actions.

The most serious "nuclear option" that has been considered is the invocation of Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution, which allows the Spanish government, if a self-governing region like Catalonia "does not fulfill the obligations imposed upon it by the Constitution or other laws, or acts in a way that is seriously prejudicial to the general interest of Spain," to "take all measures necessary to compel the community to meet said obligations, or to protect the above mentioned general interest," pending senate approval.¹⁴ This committee is able to

¹³CNN, "Hundreds injured as Spain cracks down on Catalan referendum"

¹⁴Washington Post, "The future of Catalonia may well hinge on an 84-word section of the 1978 Spanish Constitution"



recommend invoking Article 155, but caution is necessary as this move would be legally unprecedented, as this option has only been considered once before, by Prime Minister Gonzalez in 1989. It is possible that Article 155 could be used to suspend parts of Catalonia's autonomous rights in order to impose direct rule over the region, but given that the powers of this law are exceptionally broad with minimal parameters, this committee, if it chooses to recommend Article 155, will be responsible for determining what measures the government can and should take if Article 155 is invoked.¹⁵

Article 155 would open up some significant options for Spain to exert greater control over the Catalan Parliament and over the public administration that directly affects Catalan



citizens and governance on a daily basis. For starters, Article 155 could be used to dissolve the Catalan parliament entirely, which would politically cripple the region.¹² Although the option implies that the region wouldn't have a parliament

entirely, this application of Article 155 would force Catalonia to hold new elections within a very short time frame.¹⁶ In doing so, the separatist movement would be scrambling to find new officials and could very well fail to maintain a majority in the Parliament.¹² This could be perhaps the most effective way to restore order within the region, as the democratic way in

¹⁵The New York Times, "Article 155: The 'Nuclear Option' That Could Let Spain Seize Control of Catalonia

¹⁶ The Guardian, "Spain dissolves Catalan parliament and calls fresh elections"



which the officials would be elected would be more satisfactory as opposed to launching a full-scale arrest of Catalan leaders. In order to ensure the outcome of a Spanish-supporting majority within the Catalan Parliament, the Cabinet could try to find ways that would influence the outcome of local elections. However, it must be aware that if such an action were discovered, the separatist movement would surely grow as a response.

Another option that the Cabinet could pursue would be the dissolution of Catalan separatist political forces, under the leadership of Mr. Carles Puigdemont, could leave the



movement in disarray and without a clear path forward in terms of leadership. It is likely that Puigdemont would be forced to leave Spain and Catalonia entirely if the Cabinet pursued this option, as it could then move to arrest him.¹⁷ By creating a warrant for his arrest, the Spanish police could pursue Puigdemont across Europe if he chose to flee the country and would essentially

prevent him from legitimizing his role as the Catalan leader.¹⁵ Moreover, there is no legal precedent in Spain for any political leader such as Mr. Puigdemont to lead from abroad, so if he challenged in court, Spanish judiciary officials could easily strike him down.¹⁸

The Cabinet could also take a step further and remove Catalan public administrators such as the chief of police or the head of public broadcasting in Catalonia. As with the dissolution of the Parliament, the Spanish government could replace these public officials with ones that are more sympathetic to their cause. While public officials don't have quite the same

¹⁷ Reuters, "Spain to seek ex-Catalan leader's arrest if he travels to Denmark"

¹⁸ BBC, "Catalonia's Puigdemont cannot lead from abroad, court rules"



ability to politically lead the separatist movement, they are able to decide whether the orders of such public officials are carried out. If the Cabinet chooses to replace separatist public administrators with Spanish-supporting ones, the abilities of the separatist legislators within the Catalan Parliament to actually enact their ideas would be seriously hampered. The powers of Article 155 don't stop domestically, however. Article 155 allows the Spanish government to shut down Catalonia's international embassies and would leave the region with a severely restricted ability to reach out to the international community.¹³ Without domestic or international aid, Catalonia could see its separatist movement come crashing down. However, the Cabinet must consider the repercussions of any action it takes, as each one is likely to stir up resentment towards the Spanish government and fuel the fire of the independence movement. It is up to the Cabinet to decide how to best execute its goals of ending the separatist movement while maintaining maximum political and social stability at the same time.

Questions to Consider

1. Should this committee invoke Article 155 and to what extent should Article 155 be used as justification to intervene in Catalonia's previously autonomous affairs?
2. How should the Spanish government deal with leaders of the Catalan Independence Front and their unconstitutional actions in holding the referendum? And how might punishing these leaders affect Catalan sentiment towards the Spanish government?
3. What should the Spanish government do about Catalonia's President, Mr. Carles Puigdemont, given his role in conducting the illegal referendum?

Helpful Links



<https://www.cnbc.com/2017/10/13/article-155-what-spains-nuclear-option-really-means.html>

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[12/catalonia-s-stalemate-and-why-both-sides-are-stuck-quicktake](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-02-12/catalonia-s-stalemate-and-why-both-sides-are-stuck-quicktake)



Committee Positions:

Note: These positions will all be distributed by position name as shown. We will not be using any individual names simply because some of these positions were created for the intents of the simulation. We hope that delegates will be able glean portfolio powers based on position name, but if you have any questions or need further clarification, do not hesitate to email us at our committee email. Good luck!

1. Ambassador to France
2. Ambassador to the United States
3. Attorney General of the State
4. Director of the National Intelligence Center
5. Directorate-General of the Police and the Civil Guard
6. Governor of the Bank of Spain
7. Majority Leader of the Senate
8. Minister of Agriculture/Fishing, Nutrition, and Environment
9. Minister of Defense
10. Minister of Economy, Industry, and Competitiveness
11. Minister of Education, Culture, and Sport
12. Minister of Employment and Social Security
13. Minister of Energy, Tourism, and the Digital Agenda
14. Minister of Finance and Civil Service



15. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
16. Minister of Health, Social Services, and Equality
17. Minister of Home Affairs
18. Minister of Justice
19. Minister of Public Works and Transport
20. Minister of Treasury and Public Function
21. Permanent Representative to the European Union
22. Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
23. Permanent Representative to the United Nations
24. Representative from Madrid in Catalonia
25. Spokesperson of the Government of Spain