 Commentary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Abkhazia

As is well known, on October 1, 2017 in Catalonia, a referendum took place, as a result of which 90% of citizens voted for independence from Spain. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Abkhazia watched with special interest the progress of the referendum in Catalonia and its consequences.

The Spanish authorities, who initially refused to recognize the results of the referendum, took unprecedented steps of not only political, but also forceful pressure on the supporters of Catalonia's independence. In particular, on the eve of the referendum, the Spanish authorities carried out numerous arrests of prominent public figures of Catalonia, and directly on the day of voting, they used brutal physical force against their own citizens who wished to exercise their democratic rights. As a result of such tough actions by the Spanish leadership aimed at suppressing any opportunities for a referendum, there are many civilian casualties.

It's unfortunate to see how, apparently, civilized European countries that declare their adherence to democratic norms and principles are trying to suppress any dissent by force.

The current events in Catalonia have many common features with the processes that took place in Abkhazia in the early 90s. Abkhazia, like now Catalonia, defended its right to independent existence exclusively by peaceful means, trying to resolve all contradictions with Georgia in the legal channel. In response, Georgia committed an act of armed aggression against civilians, unleashing a bloody war in Abkhazia.

It is necessary to understand that Catalonia, as well as Abkhazia, is a territory with its own traditions of statehood, rich in history and cultural identity. Unfortunately, the modern authorities of Spain commit a serious crime against their own citizens, trying to suppress the desire of the people of Catalonia to independence, through brutal violence.

We are deeply convinced that the current difficult internal political crisis in Spain must be resolved in a legal way, through negotiations and compromise solutions.

Sukhum, 7 October 2017