

**Ms Drew Gilpin Faust  
Lord Chancellor of Harvard University  
Harvard University  
Massachusetts Hall  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
USA**

Dear Madam Faust,

We are writing out of concern over the news that Mr. Artur Mas will giving a conference at the prestigious institution over which you preside.

We are not blinded to the fact that a University should always be open to different opinions and should avoid any kind of censorship; At the same time, we can not ignore the fact that, given the high demands placed on the best universities in the world, the mere fact that a lecturer is admitted presupposes that in a certain way, the prestige of the university is transferred to the lecturer. At the same time, the latter contributes to increasing or decreasing that of the University.

That is precisely why we were so surprised that Mr. Mas has been admitted to your institution. Mr. Mas was Secretary General of the Convergence Democratic Party of Catalonia (CDC) from 2000 until its dissolution in 2016. During those years the party was implicated in cases of corruption so serious that they led to its demise. These cases include the awarding public contracts to companies in exchange for bribes and have affected infrastructure, health and even technical vehicle inspection services.

The implications of these scandals are so serious that the headquarters of the party led by Artur Mas is being seized to account for any compensation that may result from the proceedings initiated by the illegal funding of said party stemming from these cases of corruption.

This corruption has been made possible by the control that CDC has exercised from multiple Catalan administrations, including the Generalitat de Catalunya, the regional government, which was chaired by Mr. Artur Mas from 2010 to 2016.

The region of Catalonia has enjoyed extensive self-government since 1979 and manages such important competences as health, education, culture, police and certain infrastructures, among others. In the years of the government of Mr. Artur Mas's party those powers were used, according to the judicial investigations carried out to date, to illegally fund the party in the government and investigates the participation of several positions of the Catalan government at the time, in the crimes that could have been committed in relation to these cases of corruption.

Mr. Mas is attempting to present these police and judicial investigations as an attack on Catalonia by the Spanish Government and justice system. In this sense, the secessionist process that has been promoted by the Government of the Generalitat for five years is being used as a smokescreen to cover up the corruption and the public service cuts undertaken by Mr. Mas.

Many Catalans are deeply offended by the use that Mr. Mas has made of our region, our history and our culture to foment confrontation with the whole of the Spanish community and to construct a claim of victimhood lacking foundation and hurtful to our dignity. The fact that, in addition, this victimisation claim is used to cover up cases of corruption is nauseating.

Catalonia is one of the richest regions in Spain and, contrary to the independence movement's claims, has always participated in the common Spanish project and it was not until historically recent times that a sense of differentiation is being promoted that does not correspond to the Catalan reality.

This has not been an obstacle for the Government of the Generalitat. The institutions that control the independence movement, and the public means of communication are being subsidized by the Catalan administrations and they have created a story that adds insult to injury, filled with victimization claims and hatred towards the whole of Spain and its public institutions.

This is extremely serious and the damage it has already done to our coexistence will be difficult to repair. Mr. Mas is primarily responsible for this situation in trying to make the Catalans embark on a senseless adventure: one that includes breaking the ties which have been an integral part of our country for centuries, and by trying to incite hatred and generating unjustified victimization claims.

In an extremely careless irresponsible manner, and in his attempt to achieve Catalan independence by whatever means, Mr. Mas has not hesitated to use the powers and public resources conferred on him by the Constitution beyond the limits established by it. Despite his status as a Spanish authority, Mr. Mas has acted against the Constitution and disobeyed the decisions of the Constitutional Court. The situation of defenselessness in which we Catalans find ourselves, subjected to a regional government that makes expressly clear that it is acting outside the law causes a reasonable sense of indignation in many that contributes to social tension.

In short, Mr. Mas is a politician in charge of a party tainted by corruption, which has constructed a discourse based on falsehoods, has provoked an unjustified sense of disrespect that seriously damages our social coexistence and who expresses his intentions without concern for acting outside the law and without complying with judicial decisions.

Given the above, we do not believe that Artur Mas deserves to enjoy the privileged status associated with Harvard University and we are surprised that your institution has lent itself to promoting such an individual. A man facing accusations of corruption, who uses his public office to initiate an illegal process and defies the current law in a democratic country such as Spain.

And so with great respect for you and the high standards of the prestigious institution over which you preside, we could not miss this opportunity to convey our concerns about this situation.

Sincerely yours,



Mariano Gomà  
President of Societat Civil Catalana