

FOI Request – Spain (FOI 0748-15): Digest of information to be released

Email from Spain Desk to BE Madrid 13/08/2015

Subject FW: Spanish Media Summary: 13 August 2015 OFFICIAL_SENSITIVE

[REDACTED]

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: PP toughens its discourse and dismisses concessions to Catalonia

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

PP toughens its discourse and dismisses concessions to Catalonia. PP candidate for Catalonia, Xavier García Albiol, announced that he will not uphold the singular financing model approved by Catalan PP in 2012, which sought to apply the principle of ordinality. (El País 13, El Mundo 8, La Vanguardia 14)

PSOE rejects fiscal pact for Catalonia. Socialist executive rejects a preferential fiscal agreement as requested by the Catalan socialist party. (El País 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from Spain Desk to BE Madrid 03/08/2015

Subject FW: Spanish Media Summary: 3 August 2015

[REDACTED]

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas convenes elections for 27 September through an ordinary decree

[REDACTED]

Interview with Economy Minister De Guindos: “If we revert the reforms, we will go back to square one.” “In 2011, Spain was Greece in Europe, but now we are the country that grows the most.” “The future of Catalonia has always been brighter with Spain than without it.” (Sunday, La Razón 10)

[REDACTED]

PSOE identifies its big challenges. If elected PM, Pedro Sánchez will have to tackle the Catalan conflict, regional financing and pensions. (Monday, La Vanguardia 11)

CATALONIA

Catalan premier Artur Mas convenes today regional elections for 27 September through an ordinary decree. The decree will not mention the “plebiscitary” character of the election, to avoid a challenge by the central government. Electoral campaign will launch on Friday 11 September, coinciding with Catalonia’s National Day. Democratic Convergence hopes that a solid majority will force European intervention in the Catalan dispute. (Monday, La Vanguardia 9, El País 13)

Also reported:

Pro-independence group does not clarify whether it aspires to a majority of votes or whether seats are enough. (Monday, El Mundo 6)

Government trusts it will not have to suspend Catalonia’s autonomy. Justice Minister Catalá trusts in “common sense” to avoid a situation of “crisis and conflict”, which would require the application of Article 155 of the Constitution. (Monday, El País 14)

Interview with Ramon Espalader, Candidate for Democratic Union (Unió): “We have historically defended a confederal model, which can be recognised within the framework of the Spanish state. You will not see us voting a declaration of independence in the next parliament.” (Monday, El País 14)

Catalan police, Mossos d’Esquadra, will not be allowed to investigate cases outside Catalonia. They will have to give the information to the Guardia Civil or the Police but could continue to collaborate on cases. The agreement also affects the Police force in Navarra and the Basque Country. (Sunday, El Mundo 6)

Also reported:

El Mundo editorial: a wise agreement given the rising independent movement in Catalonia. The decision complies with the Catalan Statute and the law from the State Security Forces and Bodies. (Sunday, El Mundo 3)

King to address European Parliament after Catalan elections (Diplomat in Spain)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 09/02/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 9 February 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Artur Mas testifies today before parliamentary commission investigating fraud and tax evasion

[REDACTED]

SPANISH ECONOMY

[REDACTED]

Foreign investment in Spain hit by historic fall of 45% in Catalonia. First government estimates calculate €15.5 billion foreign investment in Spain in 2014, slightly below previous year. (Monday, La Razón 27)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas testifies today before parliamentary commission investigating fraud and tax evasion. "Nobody believes that Mas was unaware of Pujol commissions and business dealings", says Ciudadanos. (Monday, El Mundo 11, ABC 20, La Vanguardia 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 01/12/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 1 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Rajoy's speech in Barcelona: Rajoy rejects negotiating Artur Mas' "trip to nowhere"

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

Interview with Foreign Minister Garcia-Margallo: On Catalonia: "A unilateral secession is impossible. Otherwise, we can talk about everything". Garcia-Margallo argues that there is consensus in Europe that "Catalonia will have to queue to join EU" and admits that no leader has called him regarding 9 November. On UNSC membership: hopes for strong coordination among EU members of UNSC – Spain will "honour its commitments" to those countries that voted for it. On Gibraltar: border to controls to fight against tobacco smuggling and money laundering continue. "We are trying to end a fiscal regime that is unjust, that distorts the internal market and harms our companies". (Monday, La Razón 10-12)

Catalonia, Spain and Podemos – seen from afar. International experts tend to be less dramatic about the Spanish crisis. "I am less concerned by the territorial question than the rise of populist forces" (Eurasia Group) – "Madrid is pushing more and more Catalans towards independence" (CER). (Sunday, El Pais)

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Rajoy's speech in Barcelona: Rajoy rejects negotiating Mas' "trip to nowhere" – "I have never negotiated and will never negotiate the equality of Spaniards and their right to decide what they want their country to be." (Saturday, El Mundo)

Also reported in:

Rajoy blames Mas for his lack of governance in Catalonia and for the failure of 9 November. Despite expectations raised since Rajoy said he would have to explain himself better, it became clear that this was to deepen his rejection of secession and not win over pro-independence supporters. Convergence and Union interpreted this stance as a new rejection that reasserts their irreversible plan to convene plebiscite elections. (Sunday, El Pais 14, El Mundo 4-6)

Catalan Socialists urge Rajoy to respond to Mas' 23 demands. Miquel Iceta calls for immediate dialogue between the PM and Catalan premier, after Rajoy dismissed PSOE's proposal for federal reform on Saturday. (Monday, El Pais 18)

Pro-independence bases support joint list candidacy. Catalan National Assembly redoubles pressure on Republican Left to support Mas' plan to build a "transversal candidacy" among all pro-independence forces. (Sunday, El Pais 15)

Catalan government tests Rajoy's economic support. The Generalitat will present a budget that includes items subject to political negotiation. (Monday, La Vanguardia 11)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 02/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 2 January 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

Interview: "ISIL extension in the North of Africa is a threat to our security". Spanish Foreign Secretary says he thinks there are signs of important changes in a positive direction in the Middle East and that the US could beat strongly to reach an agreement about Iran's nuclear programme which could have positive effects in places like Syria. He says the black flag of ISIL already flows in some cities in Lybia and says Spain's aspiration is to host a conference in Madrid. Spain hopes to reform the UN's Security Council by increasing non-permanent countries' mandate and limiting partially the veto power of the permanent members, among others. He also says he will do everything he can to stop a declaration of independence in Catalonia and says he would bet no country would recognise Catalonia as a sovereign state. (El País, 11)

[REDACTED]

Rajoy begins contacts with all the sectors in Catalan society this month. (ABC 19)

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

ERC gives Mas an ultimatum of 15 days to call early elections. Leftist republicans criticize that the Catalan president did not make any references to them in his end-of-the-year speech. (La Vanguardia 11)

ERC leader Junqueras attacks Podemos for not wanting “independence”. ERC’s leader talks about the boom of Iglesias’ party and compares it with the PP. (El Mundo 6)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 02/03/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 2 March 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

SPAIN: Catalonia is the region with highest risk of jihadist radicalisation

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

“Jihadist danger threatens Catalonia” – Catalonia is the region with highest risk of radicalisation. Intelligence services pursue five Islamist organisations that could be recruiting grounds for radicals. (Monday, ABC 16)

Former deputy Oriol Pujol will have to clarify Artur Mas’ role in illegal business, before parliamentary commission today. (Monday, ABC 22, La Vanguardia 19)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 03/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 3 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Republican Left rejects a joint pro-independence list

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Republican Left rejects the joint pro-independence list proposed by Artur Mas. ERC's Oriol Junqueras distances himself from Mas, but calls for a unity government. Junqueras' plan presented yesterday would seek to act as an independent state "from the first day" of the new term, without the negotiation period proposed by Mas. (El Pais 12, El Mundo 8, ABC 26, La Vanguardia 14-15)

A Catalan budget with "fictitious" items. Catalan government asks for more flexibility in regional deficit targets and claims €2.18 billion from Spanish Government's pending debts. The 2015 budget is missing parliamentary support for approval. (El Mundo 10, El Pais 13, ABC 27, La Razón 10-11)

Also reported in:

Editorial: When Catalan Economy Minister Mas-Colell refers to a "political" budget, he suggests that it can be exploited in the conflict between both administrations. (La Vanguardia 54)

Justice Minister Rafael Catalá warns about the "unfortunate memory" of seeking legitimacy by mobilising the masses in Europe – "Outside the law, nothing can be discussed. Within the law, everything". (El Pais 13, La Razón 12)

Catalan Socialists leader Miquel Iceta defends his federal alternative in Brussels. Iceta warns that a unilateral declaration of independence will not be recognised. (La Vanguardia 18)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 04/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 4 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Nationalist groups put pressure on Republican Left to reach an agreement with Artur Mas

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Nationalist groups put pressure on Republican Left to reach an agreement with Artur Mas. Mas and ERC leader Junqueras will meet shortly to discuss positions. (El Pais 14)

Also reported in:

Mas asks for “generosity” before meeting with Junqueras. Mas criticises ERC’s rejection of a joint list and opens a new round of talks with parties to seek an agreement. (El Mundo 11, ABC 24, La Vanguardia 13)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 05/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 5 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Catalan government thinks there will be an agreement with Republican Left for early elections

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan government thinks there will be an agreement with Republican Left for early elections. Artur Mas will open “embassies” in Rome and Vienna to promote the nationalist cause, and currently has delegations in Brussels, Paris, London, Berlin and Washington. (El Pais 15, El Mundo 8, La Razón 20, La Vanguardia 17)

Anti-independence group Societat Civil criticises Rajoy for not “motivating” Catalans. The group is preparing a document with 50 initiatives to achieve a common project that is attractive to Catalans, including reforming and transferring the Senate to Barcelona, recognising Catalan as an official language, and sharing the capital city between Barcelona and Madrid. (El Pais 15, El Mundo 9, La Vanguardia 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 05/02/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 5 February 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

EU/ANTI-TERRORISM: EU convenes Mediterranean conference in Barcelona to address jihadism

[REDACTED]

EU/EUROZONE

[REDACTED]

ANTI-TERROR

EU convenes Mediterranean conference in Barcelona to address jihadism. Eight countries from the region (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Libya) are invited to the event on 13 April to review their relations with Europe. (El País 5)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Foreign Minister García-Margallo plans to lodge appeal against new Catalan “embassies” in Rome and Vienna (La Vanguardia 17, El País 14, ABC 22)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 05/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 5 January 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan PP seeks to mobilise society. PP calls on Democratic Union, Catalan Socialists and Ciudadans to join a front focused on social debate, to face pro-independence and Podemos. (Monday, El Mundo 9)

Central and Catalan government replace dialogue by courts. Beyond the lawsuit over 9 November, there are some twenty pending complaints in the Constitutional Court. (Monday, La Vanguardia 11)

Cold war between Artur Mas and Junqueras challenges the Catalan independence process (Sunday, La Vanguardia 14-15)

Catalan pro-independence movement attacks Podemos (Sunday, El Mundo 8)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 07/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 7 January 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Disagreement between Artur Mas and Oriol Junqueras prolongs unknown over early elections. Mas trusts the political calendar will become clearer from 13 January. (La Vanguardia 13)

Interview with Albert Rivera, President of Ciudadans: "We don't want neo-communism of regulated economy like Podemos" (El Economista 25)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 08/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 8 January 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

Rajoy deepens ties with Andorra to facilitate tax information exchange. First official visit by Spanish PM to Andorra coincides with Catalan parliamentary investigation on Pujol family fraud. (El Mundo 14-15, ABC 29, La Razón 24, La Vanguardia 14-15)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 09/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 9 January 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Catalan Supreme Court backs Artur Mas' prosecution for "disobeying" ban on 9 November vote

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA:

Catalan Supreme Court backs Artur Mas' prosecution for "disobeying" ban on 9 November vote. The Court stated that there are "signs" that the Catalan premier, Vice President Joana Ortega and Education Minister Irene Rigau, disobeyed the Constitutional Court's ban. (El Pais 12, El Mundo 4-5, La Vanguardia 17)

Pro-independence parties increase pressure on Oriol Junqueras to join Artur Mas (El Mundo 5)

Investment falls in Catalonia by 45% because of the pro-independence process (ABC 29)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 09/03/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 9 March 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Fear of pro-independence failure leaves 27 September up in the air. No decision before May municipal elections – seen as a “thermometer” of a process which has been dwindling over the past weeks. (Monday, ABC 22)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 10/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 10 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Artur Mas and Republican Left seek to negotiate away from the spotlight

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas and Republican Left seek to negotiate away from the spotlight. An agreement for elections can take “weeks”, says the Catalan government. (El Pais 13)

PP asks Rajoy to participate in a big event in Catalonia. The change in the government’s strategy in Catalonia will seek to deepen and increase ties with the Catalan society without previous mediation with the Catalan government and Convergence and Union. (El Mundo 10)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 11/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 11 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA: Meeting between Artur Mas and Oriol Junqueras on plebiscite elections fails

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

Pablo Iglesias is ready to take control of Podemos in Madrid and Barcelona. Podemos faces an internal process in more than 700 municipalities to design “candidates of popular unity”. (El Pais 14)

CATALONIA

Catalan socialist leader Miquel Iceta asks for an abatement of regional debt as a first step in establishing a new financing model. Iceta accuses Artur Mas of “deceiving” Catalans to save his career. (El Mundo 10, La Vanguardia 12-13)

Negotiation between Artur Mas and Oriol Junqueras on plebiscite elections fails. Both leaders commit to further discussions, but do not relinquish their differences. (La Razón 16)

Also reported in:

Mas and Junqueras agree on calendar to negotiate a solution. Democratic Convergence and Republican Left will launch a series of discussions with civil society. (La Vanguardia 11)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 12/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 12 December 2014

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

King Felipe advocates for the need to “face together” the problems of the future. King defended the Constitution in his first speech in Catalonia since the 9 November vote. Interior Minister Fernández Díaz also reiterated the Spanish government’s “firm willingness” to work under the premise “All together we are stronger”. (El Pais 13, El Mundo 10, ABC 20, La Razón 14, La Vanguardia 13)

Catalan business leaders defend Spain's unity. Catalan business association warns that "separation from the rest of Spain would mean an exit from EU, its institutions, treaties and mechanisms, which contribute to Catalonia's economic and social development." (ABC 21)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 12/02/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 12 February 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

Podemos, for an "asymmetric" and "multinational" country. Podemos leaders call for self-determination in Catalonia, Basque Country, Galicia and Balearic Islands. (El Mundo 12)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 12/06/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 12 June 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

Interview with Iñigo Méndez de Vigo, Secretary of State for EU: "The situation in Spain during the crisis would have been fatal if it were not in the Euro" – "Nobody has asked me about Catalonia in EU for a while. The topic has disappeared from the political agenda." (ABC 38)

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Constitutional Court declares preparations for the vote on 9 November 2014 were unconstitutional (ABC 30, all papers)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 13/02/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 13 February 2015

[REDACTED]

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: King toasts to Freixenet's "deeply Catalan heart" and "Spanish pride"

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

King toasts to Freixenet's "deeply Catalan heart" and "Spanish pride". Freixenet president highlights the company's desire to "serve both Catalonia and Spain". (ABC 22, El Mundo 12)

Catalan businesses say independence would cost 10.7% of GDP (El Economista 25)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 14/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 14 January 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas insists on independence as an end, but does not clarify whether he will convene elections. Catalan premier will officially announce decision tomorrow following today's meeting with Republican Left. Polls and relations with Democratic Union are key factors for the premier's decision. (El País 16, El Mundo 10)

Also reported:

Republican Left is prepared to do "what is needed" to reach a deal with Mas (La Vanguardia 12)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 14/07/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 14 July 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Democratic Convergence and Republican Left close deal to run together on 27 September

TOP TV & RADIO:

[REDACTED]

- Duran i Lleida, President of Democratic Union of Catalonia (Unió): “If I were a supporter of the independence movement I would propose things in a different way.” Artur Mas projects “a lack of trust and credibility.” “The best Unió candidate is Ramón Espadaler.” (RNE)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Democratic Convergence and Republican Left close deal to run together on 27 September. “Beginning of an agreement” means that ERC yields to pressure from CDC, for both parties to run as part of a single electoral list. (El País 22, El Mundo 4, ABC 35, La Vanguardia 12)

PSOE federal policy meeting with regional leaders in Seville. Pedro Sánchez: “The Socialist Party has defended, in each and every one of its territories, the unity of Spain. Also in Catalonia. As such, constitutional reform will guarantee a better articulation of the unity of Spain” (La Vanguardia 14, all papers)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 15/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 15 December 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: First debate on the 2015 budget tests Artur Mas’ roadmap

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

First debate on the 2015 budget tests Artur Mas’ roadmap. Republican Left suspects that if the government approves the budget, it can delay the elections until 2016. (Monday, La Vanguardia 13)

Interview with José Bou, President of Catalan Entrepreneurs: “If things get worse in Catalonia, many businessmen will leave” (Monday, ABC 24)

Green light to complaint against census used in 9 November vote (Monday, El Mundo 17, La Razón 14-15)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 15/01/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 15 January 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas to hold elections on 27 September 2015 after reaching deal with Republican Left

[REDACTED]

SPANISH ECONOMY

[REDACTED]

Tourism boosts air traffic. Barcelona-El Prat, Málaga, Tenerife, Ibiza and Alicante beat records in 2014. (El País 26, El Mundo 27)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas will hold elections on 27 September 2015 after reaching deal with Republican Left's Oriol Junqueras. Catalan premier imposes his calendar on Junqueras, while Republican Left gets Democratic Convergence to accept separate lists. The pact includes support of the 2015 budget. Junqueras: "it is the best agreement, because it allows everybody to vote in definitive and binding elections". Miquel Iceta, Catalan socialists: "It is a new failure: Mas will not have a joint list and advances elections again". José Luis Ayllón, Secretary of State for parliamentary relations: it is proof that Mas "has no interest in Catalan people's problems and no capacity to resolve them – Catalonia does not need elections" (La Vanguardia 14-16, all papers)

Also reported:

La Vanguardia editorial: Municipal elections in May will be a test for nationalist parties as they face new parties Podemos and Guanyem – failure in Barcelona could question their success. (La Vanguardia 22)

El País editorial: Artur Mas makes another tactical move to save nationalist discord. Citizen fatigue is huge, even among the most militant nationalists. (El País 30)

El Mundo editorial: A step with showcases Mas' failure and culminates an unviable plan (El Mundo 3)

ABC editorial: Artur Mas mistreats Catalans: instead of seeking continuity and taking advantage of economic improvements, Mas has opted once again for its partisan interests over Catalonia (ABC 4)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 15/05/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 15 May 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan pro-independence defies order from Central Electoral Commission to remove its flags from public buildings (El País 17, El Mundo 18, ABC 23, Vanguardia 21)

Catalan Police accuse two national policemen of helping jihadists. Mossos d'Esquadra had managed to infiltrate a jihadist cell in Barcelona which was dismantled in April, and accused two national policemen of alerting the terrorists under investigation. (El País 19, El Mundo 18, ABC 27, Vanguardia 23)

Only 30% of Catalonians are in favour of secession, according to a study from the anti-independence group Catalan Civil Society (Vozpopuli)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 16/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 16 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Republican Left agrees to support Artur Mas' budget in exchange for elections before March

[REDACTED]

SPANISH ECONOMY

[REDACTED]

Finance Ministry designs a plan to control debt in Catalonia and Valencia (El Economista 25, Cinco Dias 29)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Republican Left agrees to approve Artur Mas' budget in exchange for elections before March. "This is a political gesture and not a blank cheque", warns Republican Left. (El Pais 16, El Mundo 7, ABC 22)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 16/02/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 16 February 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Anti-independence Catalan Civil Society receives support from Rajoy, Sánchez and 20 personalities after receiving European Parliament prize. (Monday, La Vanguardia 13)

Between reform and independence. First in a series of interviews on Catalonia: majority of those interviewed consider that, with or without constitutional reform, a solution can be achieved through an agreed and binding referendum in Catalonia, even if this means more social division. (Monday, El País 12-13)

Disputes between Artur Mas and Oriol Junqueras and electioneering demoralise pro-independence support (Monday El País 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 17/06/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 17 June 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Democratic Union and Convergence prepare to break alliance over independence process, after 37 years. CDC maintains its stance and calls for "clear and explicit" support for independence. (La Vanguardia 14, all papers)

Also reported:

Op-ed by journalist Lluís Bassets: Democratic Convergence "has never presented itself in elections with a point in its programme that says: we want Catalonia's independence and whoever gives us a vote will be voting in favour of this objective" (El País 11)

Catalan government opens a delegation in Rome without communicating it to the Embassy. (ABC 28, La Razón 17)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 18/06/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 18 June 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Rupture of Convergence and Union over independence ultimatum

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Rupture of Convergence and Union over independence ultimatum leaves UDC ministers out of Catalan government. The governing council of Democratic Union decided that that Vice-president Joana Ortega, Minister of Agriculture Josep Maria Pelegrí and Minister of Home Affairs (also secretary general of UDC) Ramon Espadaler, should quit Artur Mas' government. (La Vanguardia front-page, all papers)

Also reported:

Opposition sees CiU divorce as a "failure" of Artur Mas' project. Republican Left offers to enter government to guarantee "stability". (La Vanguardia 17)

Crisis in Convergence and Union favours constitutionalist parties (ABC 19)

Top Editorials:

Artur Mas' shredder. Mas can now compose a cabinet focused on pro-independence activism, and Democratic Union can advocate for more moderate, conciliatory and pro-dialogue Catalanism. (El País editorial)

Mas hits rock bottom with Convergence and Union rupture. Democratic Union should be commended for removing its three ministers so as not to support Convergence's suicidal plan towards a unilateral declaration of independence. (ABC editorial)

Artur Mas remains alone in the pro-independence process after breaking with Duran Lleida. (El Mundo editorial)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 19/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 19 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Justice Minister Catalá advocates for “healing wounds”

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Justice Minister Catalá advocates for “healing wounds” in Barcelona. Catalá defended the need to “stay together” to “face complex and demanding problems” – “there is nothing less Catalan than violating the law” – the Constitution has given Catalonia “the highest level of autonomy in its history”. (El Pais 19)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 19/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 19 January 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas’ pro-independence bloc loses four seats (La Razón poll)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

La Razón/NC Report poll: Artur Mas’ pro-independence bloc falls by four seats. Artur Mas loses 16 seats (34 total), Oriol Junqueras wins 12 seats (33 total), CUP maintains 3 – a total of 70 seats compared to 74 in 2012. (Monday, La Razón 10)

Interview with Oriol Junqueras, Republican Left: “If we win on 27 September, independence will begin”. Junqueras recognises that the pact reached last week with Artur Mas is fragile and that if his party obtains more votes than Convergence and Union in the election, he will go “beyond, because that is what citizens have wanted”. (Monday, El Pais 10)

Also reported:

Republican Left and Convergence and Union already disagree on the roadmap for independence. (Sunday ABC 28)

Interview with Alicia Sánchez-Camacho, PP Catalonia: “27 September is a great occasion for the silent minority to wake up” (Sunday, La Razón 28-29)

Rajoy asks Mas not to deceive himself: “plebiscite elections do not exist” (Monday, La Vanguardia 13)

Pedro Sánchez claims Rajoy and Mas are lying about Catalonia with electoral interests, defends federalism as a solution (Monday, La Vanguardia 15)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 20/02/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 20 February 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas sets up a Central Bank for an independent Catalonia. (La Razon 13)

Rajoy and Mas will meet today after not speaking to each other for seven months. French Premier Manuel Valls will also attend the opening of a high voltage line between Spain and France. (El Pais 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 20/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 20 January 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Republican Left approves Artur Mas' budget

[REDACTED]

TOP RADIO&TV:

- Pedro Sánchez, PSOE: "We will not make any pacts with populism before, during or after" – "We need people in politics that can provide solutions, not create conflicts." – "Catalan citizens and all Spaniards are waiting for a deep constitutional reform, which must be tackled soonest" (RNE)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Republican Left approves Artur Mas' budget following the pact on early elections. Catalan Finance Minister announced a 50% staff increase at the Catalan Tax Agency with 186 jobs – a priority item for ERC. (El Mundo 9, La Vanguardia 15)

Artur Mas plans to open three new "embassies" abroad – in China, Eastern Europe and possibly Morocco or Latin America. (El País 15, La Razón 12)

Interview with Susana Beltrán, Vice-president of Catalan Civil Society: “anti-secessionist Catalans have an opportunity on 27 September” – “Podemos fluctuates: there is a sector in favour of the right to decide but another that is against...Republican Left is the most concerned [with the rise of Podemos].” (El País 15)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 20/07/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 20 July 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas warns: voting against him is voting against Catalonia

[REDACTED]

TOP TV & RADIO:

- Raül Romeva, number one on Catalonia’s pro-independence list: “We are at a point where we must have clear priorities. I support structural reform, but we need more tools.” “We resort to dialogue, but when there is a possibility of resolving something through dialogue they take you to court.” (RNE)

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas warns: voting against him is voting against Catalonia. Mas declares that on 27 September voters will have to choose “between liberty and decadence”. (Monday, all papers)

Also reported:

El Mundo editorial: Artur Mas leaps into the abyss with a populist and sectarian speech. The recipe to tackle this huge challenge is the necessary strength of State institutions.

Podemos leader Pablo Iglesias seeks candidate today for Catalonia. “Catalunya, Sí que es Pot” (Podemos and Initiative for Catalonia Greens) presents itself as the only social alternative to the pro-independence unitary list. (Monday, La Vanguardia 12)

Also reported:

Interview with Alberto Garzón, United Left candidate for PM: “If everything goes well in September, Catalunya, Sí que es Pot will be an example to build a similar alliance for general elections.” (Sunday, eldiario.es)

Catalonia: there is an alternative to independence. Interview with Alicia Sánchez Camacho (PP Catalonia), Inés Arrimadas (Ciudadanos) and Miquel Iceta (Catalan Socialist Party). “The challenge is mobilising those that are not for independence,” says Ciudadanos’ candidate. (Sunday ABC 24)

PM Rajoy designates Sánchez-Camacho as PP regional candidate for Catalonia. PP decides to address party renewal after Catalan elections. (Monday, La Vanguardia)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 21/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 21 January 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan government aims for own tax office beyond 27 September. Spokesperson Francesc Homs: "I would not dare say that the Catalan tax office will be able to collect 100% or most taxes in Catalonia by the end of the year." (La Vanguardia 16-17)

Catalonia asks for €9.4 billion from regional rescue fund despite pro-independence drive (El Economista 23)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 21/07/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 21 July 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Pro-independence front presents its calendar and objectives

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas' pro-independence list presents its calendar and objectives. The pro-independence front will be called "Junts pel Sí" and will declare secession if the central government blocks the Catalan Executive or Parliament after 27 September. (El País 15, El Mundo 8, ABC 20, La Vanguardia 12)

PP avoids anticipating its political and legal response. Government and PP say they have enough legal "instruments and tools" to respond to challenges or actions by the Catalan Government or Parliament, "but not to declarations" (El País 16)

Also reported:

La Razón editorial: Slow justice plays in Artur Mas' favour (La Razón 3)

Government confirms that it will use the National Security Law to counter Mas (La Razón 12)

Pablo Iglesias supports the right to decide. In Barcelona yesterday, Iglesias presented Podem's electoral coalition (with Catalonia Greens and United Left) for 27 September and

general elections. “We commit to respect the democratic will of Catalans, without a doubt. The way this will happen in legal terms will surely present difficulties.” (La Vanguardia 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 21/10/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 21 October 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas tries to win time before convening elections

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Only Catalan premier can call early elections, pro-sovereignty groups told: “The power to call elections is the exclusive and non-transferable right of the premier of the Catalan executive” said government spokesman Francesc Homs on Monday. Homs admitted Mas was considering early plebiscite elections but refused to talk about dates. Homs also announced that the government had reached a “technical agreement” with Popular Unity Candidates, which lays out plans for the creation of a technical body from parties to verify the operations needed to hold the vote. (El Pais English)

Also reported in:

Artur Mas tries to win time to convene elections. Convergence and Union says there will be elections “when the time comes, but it is not presently”. Madrid does not yet know how to act against the new 9 November vote. El Pais editorial: Artur Mas pursues his re-election more than a referendum, while pro-sovereignty unity is not recovering (El Pais 15-16, 30)

Popular Unity Candidates deny having any bilateral agreement with Mas. Republican Left leader Junqueras said the current political situation in Catalonia is “ungovernable” and insisted that his party will not support the regional budget. (El Mundo 10-11)

Republican Left and Catalonia Greens negotiate behind Mas’ back: they reject “technical unity” for the alternative referendum and call for “immediate elections”. (ABC 20-21)

Opinion: The presence of Spain in the UNSC makes Catalonia’s international recognition more problematic (La Vanguardia 18)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 22/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 22 January 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

27 September campaign launches as parliamentary debate takes an electoral tone. The early election was criticised by opposition, the most vocal being Catalan socialists, PP and Citizen's party. (La Vanguardia 16)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 22/10/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 22 October 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas seeks an "in extremis" agreement with Republican Left

[REDACTED]

TOP TV:

- Enrique Barón, former Socialist Minister and former President of the European Parliament: Federalism "would be a solution for all Spaniards, not just Catalans". Central government maintains an excessively defensive stance, but the law must be respected.

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas seeks an "in extremis" agreement with Republican Left. The meeting with ERC leader Junqueras will allow Mas to get a sense of ERC's support for the alternative referendum, explore future partnership, and see how long Junqueras will stand without convening elections. (El Pais 12)

Also reported in:

Pro-referendum bloc fails in its attempt to rebuild unity for the new 9 November. Popular Unity Candidates leave political negotiations to promote 9 November on the streets (La Vanguardia 14-15)

Junqueras thinks that Mas gives preference to constitutional reform rather than obtaining real independence (El Economista 24)

Moody's thinks Catalonia will reach a favourable fiscal pact. Mas' decision to ditch the original referendum "reduces short-term political uncertainty both for Catalonia and Spain". Moody's understands that the Catalan debate can now shift towards a discussion about transferring more powers to Catalonia on fiscal matters. (La Vanguardia 56)

Interview with Miquel Iceta, Catalan Socialists' leader: "PSC is ready to assume the political cost of supporting Mas" – "plebiscite elections are an attempt to cover up a failure" (El Pais 13)

Also reported in:

Iceta urges socialist mayors to collaborate with the alternative vote if the Catalan government requests it. (El Mundo 13)

Catalan police force calls for legal protection for 9 November. Catalan government assures they will only undertake public order tasks. (El Mundo 12)

President of the Community of Madrid Ignacio González commends King's role in Catalan situation. González yesterday launched a series of meetings between King Felipe and regional presidents. (ABC 22)

President of Supreme Court Carlos Lesmes: "Justice will act if the Law is not respected in Catalonia" (La Razón 12-13)

Liechtenstein investigates Jordi Pujol for money laundering (El Mundo 7, ABC 18-19)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 26/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 26 January 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

PP warns that the law will be respected and there will be no break-up on 27 September. In the PP party convention, Rajoy was clear and reduced expectations on the outcome of these elections: regional elections, not more, not less. (Monday, La Vanguardia 10)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 26/11/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 26 November 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas unveils plan to proclaim independence within 18 months

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas unveils plan to proclaim independence within 18 months. The Catalan premier refuses to convene elections that do not have a "plebiscite" character, and puts pressure on Republican Left to accept a joint pro-independence list. Mas justifies the joint list as the only way to obtain a clear result. (El Pais 12-13, El Mundo 4)

Also reported in:

Rajoy responds to Mas: politics is not the “alternative” to law. The plan is “a step further in Mas’ independence venture, despite the fact that each time he has less support among Catalan society” (ABC 22-23, La Vanguardia 17)

El Mundo editorial: Elections and the plan to engage in procedural negotiations are just simple tricks to give a democratic appearance to a very serious policy of faits accomplis. (El Mundo 3)

La Vanguardia editorial: Two fundamental facts cannot be dismissed: on 9 November the majority of Catalans did not go to vote; and there is no homogenous political bloc in Catalonia. The plurality of Catalan society is still significant compared to the mobilised and highly motivated pro-independence camp. (La Vanguardia 22)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 27/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 27 January 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Republican Left forces Artur Mas to testify before parliamentary committee investigating the “Pujol case”

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Republican Left votes for Artur Mas to testify before parliamentary committee investigating the “Pujol case” (El Mundo 8, ABC 22, La Razón 19, La Vanguardia 14)

Spanish federalists join forces in Barcelona event. Federalist initiatives are flourishing in Barcelona, but also in Madrid, where more than 60 intellectuals are promoting the manifesto “A federal Spain in a federal Europe” – “Advancing towards a federal Europe and rejecting federalism in Spain does not make sense. That is why we must promote constitutional reform by consensus”, argues Nicolás Sartorius. (La Vanguardia 16)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 27/11/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 27 November 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Rajoy says Catalonia suffers from a “deficit of governance” and accuses Mas of going nowhere

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Rajoy says Catalonia suffers from a “deficit of governance” and accuses Mas of going nowhere. In the lead-up to his visit to Barcelona on Saturday, Rajoy attacked Mas, in what looked like the beginning of a possible electoral campaign. Rajoy will denounce Mas’ lack of governance centred entirely on issues of independence, and will focus on his own efforts to exit the economic crisis. (El Pais 19)

Also reported in:

Rajoy denounces divisions within the anti-independence front. PSOE and UPyD have distanced themselves from the PM in rejection of his strategy since the 9 November vote. (El Mundo 12-13)

Rajoy promises Catalans he will substitute the Catalan government’s “inaction”. In an interview with 8tv, Mas accused Rajoy of representing only “a minority of Catalans”. (La Vanguardia 19-21)

Republican Left’s Oriol Junqueras resists joining Artur Mas’ plan for secession. ERC argues independence should not take a year and a half to negotiate, and wants Catalan institutions to act as an independent state as soon as the pro-independence camp gains a majority in parliament. Junqueras will detail his plan in a conference on 2 December. (El Pais 18)

Also reported in:

Junqueras will negotiate an alternative to the joint list with Mas. ERC moves from initial bewilderment to a conciliatory attitude. (La Vanguardia 18)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 28/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 28 January 2015

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Jordi Pujol tells court that secret fortune came from his father

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan ex-premier Jordi Pujol tells court that secret fortune came from his father. Pujol did not produce any documents to support his testimony. (El Pais English, all papers)

Democratic Convergence thinks it is treason to force Artur Mas to testify on the “Pujol case”. Catalan government accuses Republican Left of hurting the plebiscite elections. (El País 11, El Mundo 6, La Vanguardia 11)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 28/11/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 28 November 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas awaits Republican Left to confirm the calendar for plebiscite elections

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan socialists reject a pact with Convergence and Union because of Artur Mas' radicalisation. PSC leader Iceta remains convinced that constitutional reform is inevitable. (ABC 28)

Catalan government requests sanctions for not publicising 9 November. Artur Mas urges the Catalonia Audiovisual Council to investigate three broadcasters. (El Mundo 14, La Razón 22)

Artur Mas' Democratic Convergence party awaits Republican Left's reaction to confirm the calendar for plebiscite elections. (La Vanguardia 21)

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 29/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 29 January 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Jordi Pujol denies inheritance. Former Catalan premier tells the judge he did not want to know anything about the "legacy" his father left to his family in Andorra, but did indicate names of those that managed the money. (El Mundo 4, La Vanguardia 11)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 30/12/2014

Subject Spanish Media Summary 30 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Pro-independence civic organisations put pressure on Catalan government and ERC secessionists to reach agreement on early elections

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Pro-independence organisations activate demand President Mas calls early elections. ANC and Omnium offer their support to the Catalan regional president to go to elections. The refusal by ERC pro independence party leader to have a joint candidature prevents an agreement. (El Pais 10) (La Vanguardia 14) (El Mundo 4)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 30/01/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 30 January 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Principality judge says no proof exists that money in Pujol's alleged accounts came from illegal sources. Andorra and Switzerland have also stalled requests by Spanish justice to supply information. (El País English)

Prosecutor seeks to sanction judge who wrote Catalonia's separatist "Constitution" (El Mundo 8)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 31/12/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary 31 December 2014

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Regional president calls for unity of Catalans and makes no mention of early elections in end-of-the-year speech

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Mas calls for unity and presents himself as the leader of the secessionist drive. Catalan regional president says "the State wants us to be divided, it knows we are weaker and more vulnerable that way", and says in the incoming weeks "complicated and not lacking risk" decisions will have to be taken. (La Vanguardia 13) (La Razón 10) (El País 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 10/02/2015

Subject Erratum: Spanish Media Summary: 10 February 2015

[REDACTED]

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: Artur Mas tries to distance his government from the Pujol scandal

TOP TV:

- Pablo Casado, PP campaign committee: On Catalonia: "Artur Mas' declaration demonstrated that in Catalonia there is no project, there is no management. Parliament is not serious." With Bárcenas, "We asked for an apology and kicked him out the party." – On Podemos: "Without having handled one single euro of public money, there are already five alleged cases of corruption"

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas declares before the anti-corruption commission that the Pujol fraud is a family matter. Catalan premier tries to distance his government from the scandal. Opposition expresses doubt over Mas' explanations of his relation with Pujol. (El País 10-11, El Mundo 4-5, ABC 16-17, La Vanguardia 12-14, La Razón 12)

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 28/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 28 August 2015

[REDACTED]

TOP RADIO & TV:

- Inés Arrimadas, Ciudadanos' candidate for Catalonia regional elections: "Our objective is to lead a political alternative in Catalonia. It is not a matter of the number of seats that we have." "There is so much money in the budget that can be used for social policies and which is now being used to support pro-independence." (RNE)

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Pro-independence front "Junst pel Si" promises a Catalonia without cuts or corruption thanks to Catalan president Artur Mas. (El Mundo 4)

A hypothetical Catalan independent state would only pay 64% of its pensions. Catalans deposit €5.7 billion and receive €8.8 billion in benefits. (El Economista 24)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 27/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 27 August 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Pro-independence list falls short of 11 seats to reach an absolute majority. Pro-independence front “Junts pel Si” would gain 36.3% and 57 seats, according to a poll by NC Report. That is 10 less than in a previous poll in January, in which the Catalan Social Party (PSC) had 18 seats. Now, the latest NC Report gives the PSC two seats less. PP would go from 10 seats to 12. (La Razón 10)

Confusion in the pro-independence front as to whether Catalonia would remain in the EU if it became independent. Jordi Sánchez, president of the Catalan National Assembly, said that if Catalonia became an independent state it would “undoubtedly” leave the EU. Not long after his statement, he rectified. This controversy comes shortly after Raül Romeva, number one on Catalonia’s pro-independence list, questioned the continuity of Catalan President Artur Mas having rectified his statement later. (El País 15, all papers)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 26/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 26 August 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan president Artur Mas changes his discourse on pan-Catalism. The Catalan government says the intention was to strengthen the linguistic bond between Catalonia and the Balearics, Valencia and part of Aragon. “The citizens of these regions will be what they want to be,” said the government’s spokesperson Neus Munté. (El País 14)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 25/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 25 August 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

President of Aragon Javier Lambán and President of Valencia Ximo Puig say Convergence’s pan-Catalanism is “intolerable, irresponsible and foolish.” These allegations come after regional justice minister Germà Gordó said that a hypothetical Catalan state would also include the Balearics, Valencia and part of Aragon and France. (El País 13)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 24/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 24 August 2015

[REDACTED]

Ciudadanos will make changes to reflect its national identity. Its executive body will include its leaders in other autonomous regions, closing a period in which the party was more focused on Catalonia. (Monday, El Mundo 4)

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Barcelona locals opposing independence display Spanish flags on house fronts. (Monday, El País 17)

Interview with PP Candidate in Catalonia Xavier García Albiol. "I think it is intelligent to talk about a Constitutional reform at this time." Catalan solidarity must "have limits." (Sunday, El País 15)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 21/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 21 August 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

PP and Ciudadanos move forward on their anti-independence pact. The PP in Catalonia drew a deal to build an anti-independence front with the Catalan Socialist party (PSC) and Ciudadanos if the pro-independence unitary list were to gain wide support during the elections. PSC turned down being part of the front. (El País 14)

Rajoy steps back regarding policies to promote Spanish education in Catalonia's private schools. Subsidies have decreased by 80% in just a year. (El Mundo 4)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 17/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 17 August 2015

[REDACTED]

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS:

[REDACTED]

- CATALONIA: According to a Metroscopia's poll, the number of those in favour of independence would fall to 29% if a referendum on independence included an alternative to the status quo and independence

[REDACTED]

TOP TV & RADIO:

- Oriol Junqueras, president of leftist pro independence party ERC: “It makes no sense for the PP to make decisions on our policies when the Catalans do not want them (...) The relationship between Catalonia and the Spanish state is uneven (...) Independence and leftist policies are inseparable”. (Cadena SER)

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

According to a Metroscopia’s poll on Catalan elections, the number of those in favour of independence would fall to 29% if a referendum on independence included an alternative to the status quo and independence. 46% would vote in favour of remaining in Spain if there were new and guaranteed competences. 17% would support the status quo and 8% would vote no answer/no reply. (Monday, El País 16)

Interview with Raül Romeva, number one on Catalonia’s pro-independence list. “I will not defend Artur Mas’ management.” “It does not matter who will be president after 27 September.” “We will be Spain’s best ally in the EU and in the world.” (Monday, El País 15)

Catalonia has received more than €20 billion from the state since 2012. Most of the liquidity received by Catalonia comes from the Municipal Liquidity Fund set by PM Rajoy. (Monday, ABC 14)

Also reported

Catalonia is the region which will benefit the most from the 2016 budget. It will receive more than €17 billion, an increase of 12.12%. (Monday, ABC 15)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 24/04/2015

Subject RE: Spanish Media Summary: 24 April 2015

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Artur Mas now says 27 September elections conditional on Rajoy’s plan. Mas continues to generate doubts about Catalan elections, first raising the issue of “parliamentary stability”, and now saying that early general elections could also modify his plans. (El Mundo 10, ABC 18, Vanguardia 14)

Anti-independence platform Sociedad Civil calls to mobilise the vote in favour of Spain (ABC 19)

Morocco wants a big mosque in Catalonia to stop the rise of Salafists. Intelligence services monitor the fight between Moroccan regime and Islamic radicalism to control some 240,000 Moroccan residents in Catalonia. (ABC)

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 03/08/2015

Subject Re: Spanish Media Summary: 5 March 2015 OFFICIAL OFFICIAL_SENSITIVE

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Convergence and Union and Republican Left approve 2015 budget with “adapted” state structures. Artur Mas trusts that PP does not want to declare Catalan elections illegal. (*La Vanguardia 18*)

Artur Mas’ new disloyalty: putting pressure on EU with secession. Letter to European Ambassadors asks to convince Rajoy “before it is too late.” (*ABC 24*)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 16/04/2015

Subject RE: Spanish Media Summary: 16 April 2015

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

Brussels turns down Catalonia’s possibility of having an EU “ambassador”. (*ABC 24*)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 19/08/2015

Subject RE: Spanish Media Summary: 19 August 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Frictions endanger the pro-independence front “Junts pel Si” after the Republican Left implies that Catalan president Artur Mas put pressure on them to accept the unitary list. The leader of one of the two small independent parties in the front says Mas “blackmailed” them with not calling the elections if they did not become part of the unitary list. According to the politician Antonio Baños, this happened after they expressed their doubts about whether Mas should become the president if they won the elections. (*El País 15*)

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 20/08/2015

Subject Spanish Media Summary: 20 August 2015

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

CATALONIA

Catalan President Artur Mas under pressure to take part in the pro-independence Diada demonstration. Mas has not made his intentions clear on whether he will attend the yearly Diada demonstration on 11 September. He has not taken part in any of the last three pro-independence protests “to preserve his institutional role.” (*El País* 18)

Also reported

People coming from Valencia and the Balearics hold priority space at the front of the Diada demonstration. The organisations promoting the Catalan pro-independence process consider Valencia and the Balearics as Catalan regions. (*ABC* 14)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Email from Spain Desk to BE Madrid 30/04/2015

Subject RE: PRIME MINISTER RAJOY IS WATCHING [RESTRICTED]
OFFICIAL_SENSITIVE OFFICIAL_SENSITIVE

[REDACTED]

He brushed off suggestions from Catalan journalists that he might call general elections to coincide with the planned, but controversial, **Catalan elections** on 27 September, pausing to claim that the notion of plebiscitary elections did not exist and that, for all the talk of constitutional reform, it was unclear what anybody actually wanted.

[REDACTED]

Email from BE Madrid to Spain Desk 10/06/2015

Subject RE: Spanish Media Summary: 10 June 2015

[REDACTED]

SPANISH ECONOMY

Podemos, Catalonia and Greece frighten entrepreneurs – EY Barometer. 75% think that the economy will improve with current policies. (*La Razón* 30)

[REDACTED]

SPAIN

[REDACTED]

PP will approve 44 pending laws before 20 September. This legislative objective takes into account two predictions: parliamentary activity would be suspended a week before regional elections in Catalonia on 27 September, and the Courts would be dissolved at the

end of September or beginning of October. According to this calendar, general elections would be held at the end of November. (ABC 22, *El País* 17)

[REDACTED]