

Beat: Politics

The president of the Supreme Court of Spain resigns

Government and opposition disagree

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USPA NEWS - The Spanish Justice is experiencing difficult times. Its highest instances – the General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ in its acronym in Spanish), the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court – have had unfilled vacancies for four years, due to irreconcilable differences between the Socialist Government presided over by Pedro Sánchez, and the conservative Popular Party, in opposition. The Government intends to control Justice, even against the European Union, which demands a legal reform so that the governing instances of the judiciary are elected by the judges themselves. While the two main political parties accuse each other, the blockade of Justice led the president of the CGPJ and the Supreme Court, Carlos Lesmes, to present his irrevocable resignation on Monday. After being announced, Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and the leader of the opposition, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, met this Monday at the Palacio de la Moncloa, to bring positions closer together.

The Minister of the Presidency, Félix Bolaños, informed after the meeting that in the meeting between the President of the Government, Pedro Sánchez, and the leader of the Popular Party, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, it was agreed to make "one last attempt" to quickly solve the renewal of the General Council of the Judiciary, and assured that "now it is serious." Bolaños, at a press conference after the three-hour meeting at the Palacio de la Moncloa between Sánchez and Feijóo, said that the situation "is very serious," especially after the resignation of the president of the CGPJ, Carlos Lesmes, and reiterated that the Government's commitment is to reach an agreement with the Popular Party "as soon as possible" to close this institutional crisis in the judiciary.

In the meeting, which in its second part was joined by the Minister of the Presidency and the Deputy Secretary of Institutional Policy of the PP, Esteban González-Pons, it was agreed that they would now be the ones to negotiate that agreement. "We are starting now to try to reach a quick agreement," said Bolaños, who explained that they have not set a specific deadline and emphasized the need to unblock the CGPJ and the Constitutional Court. The commitment, he said, is to "hopefully negotiate seriously, now seriously, to close an agreement as soon as possible and overcome this crisis."

He did not go into details of what was discussed at the meeting and did not clarify whether the Government is willing to accept a change in the law to elect the members of the CGPJ, as requested by the PP. When asked about this possibility on several occasions, he limited himself to pointing out that it is known what the positions of each one are, that if that is an issue raised by the PP, they will maintain it, and that it will be necessary to ask that party. Regarding the reasons why it was not possible to reach an agreement this Monday, he urged to give "time to time" after four years of blockade and to wait for the work that they are going to develop "with great intensity."

Bolaños pointed out that the Government has always had a hand outstretched to the PP and that with the previous leader of this party, Pablo Casado, an agreement could be reached "in one afternoon" as soon as there was a willingness to unblock the appointment of the Ombudsman, of members of the Court of Auditors and part of the Constitutional Court. "And that is the will of the Government. To reach an agreement as soon as possible to overcome this institutional crisis that Spain does not deserve," he concluded.

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