

Birgu, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2017

## ALDA Governing Board statement on the situation in Cataluña

ALDA - *The European Association for Local Democracy* has been created and operates within the values shared and implemented for an integrated and united Europe:

- We care and work for democracy, human rights and rule of law as the very heart of our work
- We consider fundamental the full implementation of the three pillars above, which need to be pursued by every mean and despite all difficulties
- We consider decentralization and local governance particularly important for their full implementation. This is possible thanks to fully operational local and regional authorities, empowered for the wellbeing of their communities and citizens – engaged and sharing responsibilities - following the principle of subsidiarity.

The situation in Cataluña is very critical and must be immediately addressed at all levels in order to avoid violent escalations which ALDA and its partners and members have seen too often, and that only lead to devastation. Within legality and with full respect for human rights, the people and citizens have the right to freely express their opinion. Violence against ordinary citizens has no justification.

It is absolutely necessary to keep open the dialogue between the government of Cataluña and the Spanish Government. We urge the European institutions to take an active part in this process.

We demand to all stakeholders involved to work in the direction of a peaceful solution, to protect the rights of citizens from Cataluña and beyond – for all of us Europeans and Neighbors<sup>1</sup>.

### **The Governing Board of ALDA**

[http://www.alda-europe.eu/newSite/governing\\_board.php](http://www.alda-europe.eu/newSite/governing_board.php)

<sup>1</sup> ALDA works in the EU, in the Enlargement Countries (in Western Balkans) and Neighborhood (Eastern Partnership countries and Mediterranean area)