

Ambassador of Spain



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The Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP  
First Minister of Scotland  
Office of the First Minister  
St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

London, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Dear Mrs Sturgeon,

It was a great pleasure to meet you at the Italian Embassy for the EU Ambassadors' lunch the other day. Thank you very much for sharing your views on Scotland's future, an issue which is so relevant to me as a Spanish politician.

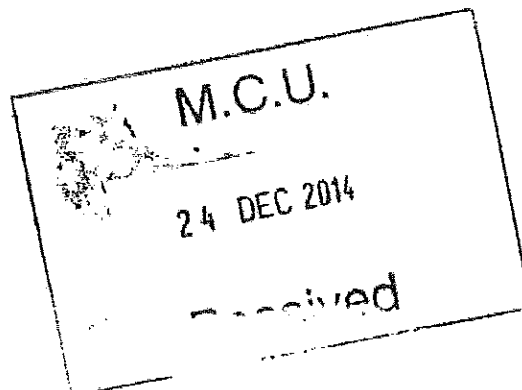
As you may remember, I met with Mr Salmond several times and I would be very interested in maintaining the good contacts we have established with the Scottish Government. With this in mind, perhaps I could come up to Scotland before the general election (perhaps February or March) to see you so we can keep up to date with developments.

For interest, please find enclosed a copy of my letter to "The Guardian" outlining the Spanish Government's position on the recent vote in Catalonia.

I wish you a happy Christmas and I hope we can meet early in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Federico Trillo-Figueroa



52-12-14

## Catalonia's vote was not constitutional

I would like to make some remarks regarding your editorial on the so-called referendum in Catalonia (Spain has stonewalled too long on Catalonia. It's time for Madrid to change its strategy, 11 November).

The basic principle of the rule of law demands that public powers acknowledge and abide by the concept of legality. In the case of Spain, that means we must respect our constitution and our courts. The Spanish government has not, as you say, "laid down that a formal vote on Catalan independence is unconstitutional". The constitutional court, the highest authority on constitutional issues, ruled that the so-called referendum could not take place, and after that the Spanish government did what all democratic governments are supposed to do: uphold the law.

This is not a political decision, but a legal and constitutional fact. Moreover, last April 85% of the Spanish parliament, where national sovereignty lies, voted that the Catalan government has no power to call any such referendum.

Stating that the poll held on 9 November "showed an overwhelming majority for independence on a turnout of about 2.2 million" is, to say the least, a hasty conclusion. More than 70% of the Catalan electorate either did not bother to vote or voted against independence in this "symbolic vote". But in any case it is a fruitless exercise to analyse the figures of a vote that lacks all legal and democratic guarantees.

The "British approach", as you call it, cannot be applied to Spain, because the political and constitutional realities differ. Our written constitution (which was voted for by an overwhelming majority of Spaniards, including 90% of Catalans) enshrines the unity of the Spanish nation. It gives a huge degree of autonomy to the regions but not the right to self-determination of any part of the country - as is the case in all the written constitutions of western democracies. Therefore, the Spanish government cannot concede this right to one region, or even negotiate about it, without first reforming the constitution.

If the Catalan government really intends to seek a legal vote on independence, the Catalan parliament can certainly make a proposal to reform it, since that is the only legal path that can be used.

**Federico Trillo-Figueroa**  
*Ambassador of Spain to the UK*



*On the occasion of the National Day of Spain*

*The Ambassador of Spain*

*requests the pleasure of the company of*

*The Rt. Hon. Nicola Sturgeon & guest*

*at a Reception on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015,*

*from 12:30 pm to 14:30 pm*

*R. S. V. P.*  
*socialsecretaryspain@gmail.com*  
*Dress code: Lounge suit*

*This invitation is required for  
entry and is non-transferable.  
Photographic proof of identity  
may be requested on arrival.*

*Spanish Embassy  
24 Belgrave Square  
London SW1X 8QA*



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*On the occasion of the National Day of Spain*

*The Ambassador of Spain*

*requests the pleasure of the company of*

***Rt. Hon. Nicola Sturgeon MSP & guest***

*at a Reception on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016,*

*from 12:30 pm to 14:30 pm*

*R. F. V. P.*

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First Minister of Scotland  
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Edinburgh EH1 3DG

18<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Dear First Minister,

May I inform you that last week I resigned as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Spain to the UK, position in which I have proudly represented Spain since 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for the friendly cooperation I have always received from you personally and from your Government during my term of office in the United Kingdom. It has been a pleasure to work together and I hope that the relation between Scotland and Spain will remain as good as it has been during these years.

*Yours sincerely*

Federico Trillo-Figueroa





Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP  
First Minister of Scotland



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

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Our ref: 2017/0003231  
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*Fer Ambassade*

Thank you for your kind letter of 18 January 2017.

I would like to express my personal gratitude for all you have done to strengthen the links between Scotland and Spain during your time as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the UK.

Your contribution to Scottish-Spanish relations has added greatly to increasing the cultural, economic and political links between our countries. I am very proud of the strong connections that exist between Scotland and Spain, and have been delighted to see them develop even further during the five years of your tenure.

I look forward to continuing this good work with your successor, whom I hope I will have the opportunity to meet in due course.

Wishing you all the very best in your next post.

*Nicola Sturgeon*

NICOLA STURGEON

