

Beat: Politics

Sanchez achieves the fifth parliamentary support for the state of alarm

Until June 7th

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USPA NEWS - Spanish Prime Minister, Pedro SÁnchez, asked Congress to extend the state of alarm for another fifteen days, until 00:00 on June 7, with the aim of continuing the de-escalation in a prudent, orderly and caring manner. SÁnchez obtained 177 votes in favor: those of the Socialist Group, to which he belongs; those of the far left group Unidas Podemos (United We Can), with which it shares government; those of the centrist Citizens; those of the Canarian nationalists; those of the deputies of Aragon and Cantabria regions, and those of the Basque nationalists (PNV Spanish acronym). 162 deputies voted against, including those of the main opposition group, the conservative Popular Party, and those of the far-right group Vox, third parliamentary force. Eleven deputies voted in white.

The support obtained this Wednesday for the extension of the state of alarm is the tightest since the pandemic began and the Spanish Government decreed a cut in constitutional rights. Several of his supporters of the Government warned him in the debate. The republican left of Catalonia (ERC, Spanish acronym) assured that "we have taken the spirit of investiture ahead," when denouncing the approach of the Government to the centrist Citizens. The Basque independentists and the small formation of the extreme left Más País (More Country) also criticized the Government, and the extreme left of the Valencia region (Compromís) took its distance from the Government to the point of voting against the new extension of the state of alarm.

In his speech before the plenary session of Congress, the president affirmed that Spain is managing to beat the virus thanks to the "extreme work of the toilets and the sacrifice of the Spanish." The number of people cured - SÁnchez pointed out - multiplies, while the newly diagnosed are reduced and 70% of the country is already in Phase 1 of the de-escalation process. "Without letting our guard down, we can affirm that the state of alarm has worked and that the Plan for De-escalation is working," said the President of the Spanish Government in his speech before the Congress of Deputies.

SÁnchez recalled that the results of the first phase of the Seroprevalence Study reveal that the infection has unevenly affected the territories and only five percent of Spaniards, and that its case fatality is around one percent, with rates higher among older people and those with previous illnesses. That investigation, he indicated, shows that the state of alarm has benefited both the areas with the most infections and the least affected, and also that the only way to stop the pandemic is through caution and security.

Coordination and institutional loyalty

"We have recovered a lot of ground against the virus - said SÁnchez - but it is still there, on the lookout," which is why it is necessary to maintain prudence and extend the state of alarm, which should rule "until such time as it becomes necessary to partially condition some rights for the sake of public health, and not one more day." The Prime Minister insisted on the importance of anticipating possible outbreaks, continuing to attend to the advice of experts and acting at each stage of the de-escalation with coordination, collaboration, solidarity and institutional loyalty. The Plan for the Transition towards a New Normality - he added - is asymmetrical, gradual and progressive, but the exit cannot be disorderly. "We will start at different speeds, but we will come out together," he said.

In the new extension, he explained, the only delegated authority of the Government will be the Minister of Health who, advised by the department's technicians and in connection with the regional authorities, will set the rhythms and modalities of the de-escalation. The communities, which have always maintained full capacity to manage their skills, will gain more and more prominence, and especially their Primary Care services.

Pedro SÁnchez stressed that the state of alarm is "fully legal" and cannot be replaced by a set of ordinary laws in an emergency moment like the current one. The Government, he added, is currently analyzing what rules should be modified to guarantee an orderly exit from the state of alarm, including the General Law on Public Health of 2011 and the National Security Law of 2015. These reforms, if necessary, would be very specific and with the sole purpose of managing the monitoring of the pandemic, once the alarm state is lifted.

The president stressed that the state of alarm has been "absolutely respectful" with individual rights and is compatible with "institutional de-escalation" and joint work with regional presidents, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, and social partners. Pedro SÁnchez insisted that Spain is getting closer to recovering "full vitality", but highlighted the "terrible economic consequences" of the pandemic, which affects people with more precarious situations and those who are more exposed to activities more seriously social contact.

The Prime Minister stated that "assisting those who need it is capital, but it is not enough" and advocated "helping those with viable projects that have been interrupted get up" and "reincorporating those who can to work as soon as possible do what." That should be one of the goals of the National Pact for Social and Economic Reconstruction, said SÁnchez, who also advocated guiding the activity towards a new production model that focuses on research, education, the ecological and digital transition, and human capital. Another key element to advance the recovery is Europe, according to the president. European solidarity - he indicated - is one of the best tools to combat the coronavirus, but also "to fight for the idea of Europe that we believe in."

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