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## CATALONIA'S PARLIAMENT ADOPTS DECLARATION OF SOVEREIGNTY

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24.01.2013 EuroNews Catalonias parliament has adopted a declaration of sovereignty, the first step towards a possible referendum on breaking away from Spain. The nationalist resolution was passed with 85 votes for and 41 against, increasing the pressure on Madrid. Catalonias two main nationalist parties signed a pact last month pledging to hold a referendum next year. Speaking in Catalan before the vote, the president of the regional government Artur Mas said it would be historic. [ ] it will not resolve our problems in 24 hours, but it will lead our country towards its destiny, A he added. A few smaller parties backed the declaration, but it was opposed by the Catalan Socialist Party and Spains governing centre-right Peoples Party. Alicia Sanchez, head of the Peoples Party of Catalonia said: [ ] Catalanian people do not want independence, they do not want this division. What you are doing today is applying pressure in defiance of the Spanish government. A Catalonias nationalists were boosted by the unexpected size of a pro-independence rally in Barcelona last September, when up to an estimated half a million people took to the streets. The declaration voted by parliament says the path towards self-determination, which is opposed by Madrid, will involve dialogue with the Spanish state, European institutions and the international community.

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