

# *Catalonians hold protest as pro-secession leaders go on trial*

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Barcelona, February 12 (RHC)-- Hundreds of pro-independence Catalonians have held a protest in Barcelona as twelve separatist leaders go on trial in Spain's capital, Madrid, over a failed secession bid.

The protesters voiced support on Tuesday for the twelve defendants, who went on trial at the Supreme Court in Madrid and faced charges of rebellion, sedition and misuse of public funds for their role in an illegal declaration of independence by the northeastern Catalonia region in October 2017. Counter-rallies were held outside the courthouse as the hearing session was underway.

The supporters of the twelve leaders carried signs reading, "Freedom for political prisoners," while a small rival group shouted "Golpista" or "coup plotter," portraying Catalonia's declaration of independence as an attempt to dismantle the Spanish state. The public prosecutor is seeking prison terms of up to 25 years.

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