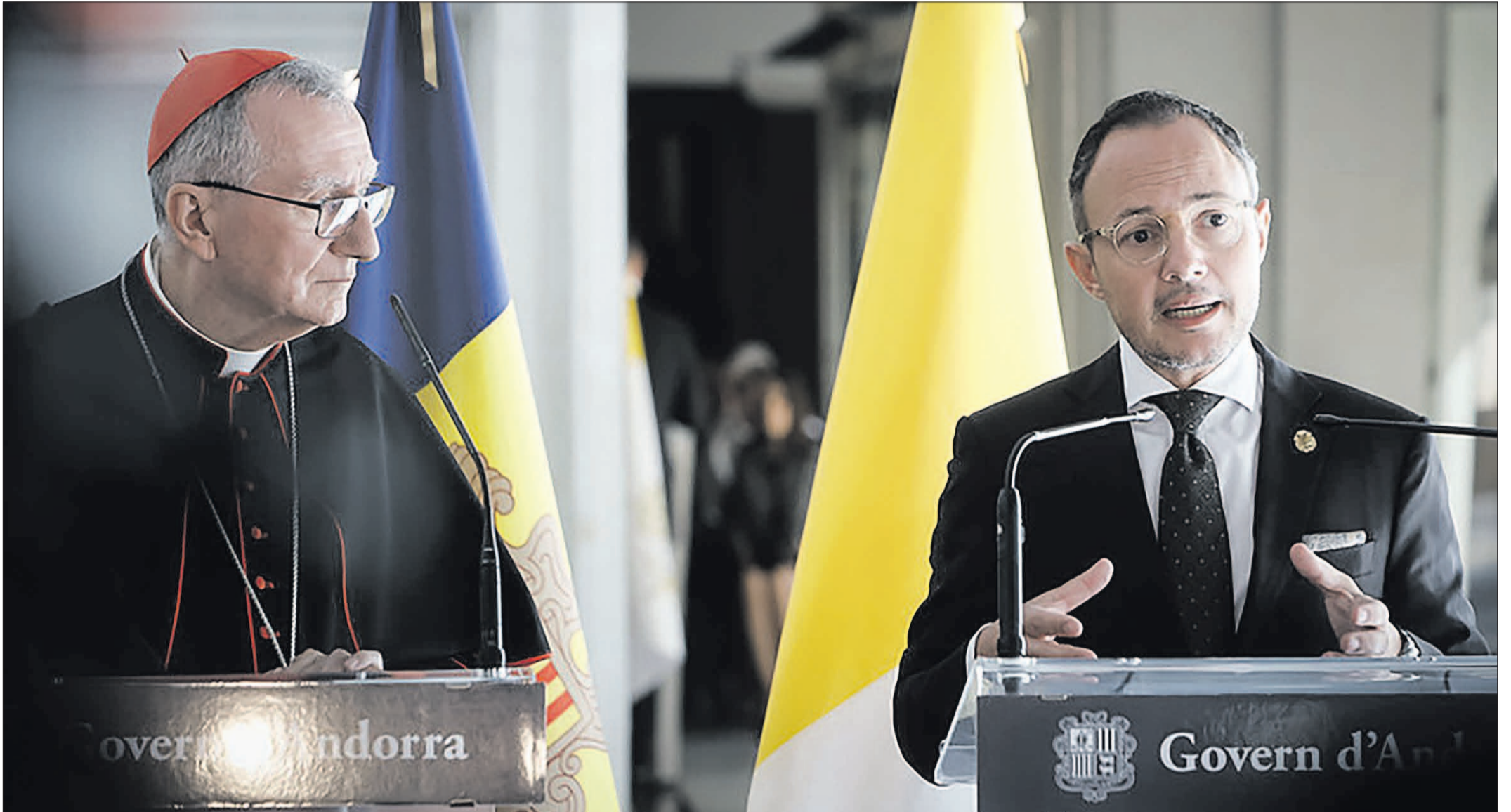




Policy ▶ Day of Meritxell and visit of the Secretary of State of the Holy See

SFGA/CEsteve



▶▶ The Secretary of State of the Holy See, Pietro Parolin, and the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, yesterday at a press conference at the sanctuary of Meritxell.

The Vatican wants «a satisfactory solution for all» regarding abortion

Parolin claims to be «working and reflecting» on this «complicated and complex issue»

Espot announces the possibility of creating «a coalition of small states» for common challenges

EL PERIÒDIC
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During the celebration of Meritxell's patroness saint's day held yesterday, the Secretary of State of the Holy See, Pietro Parolin, visited the Principality to preside over the mass, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of the Virgin of Meritxell as patroness of the country, with the Episcopal Co-principal, Joan-Enric Vives, and hold a series of working meetings with the head of government, Xavier Espot.

After the ceremony, the two presidents appeared in a press conference, where they were pleased to celebrate the good relations between the two countries. During the appearance, both Parolin and Espot explained a multitude of topics relating to the relationship between the Vatican and the Co-Principate. The most prominent was in the matter of the decriminaliza-

tion of abortion, where the Secretary of State recognized that it is a «very complicated and complex issue» that conflicts with the values «of the Holy See of the principle of defense of life at all stages». Even so, Parolin showed understanding for the demand of Andorran society in favor of decriminalization claiming that «we are working, reflecting and deepening» on this matter, but «this cannot be solved overnight». Parolin ruled that this problem requires «a lot of participation, commitment and wisdom that we are already carrying out with the Government. The only thing I can say is that we hope to find a satisfactory solution for all».

The Head of Government emphasized the good relations and cooperation carried out by the Principality and the Vatican when facing common challenges in the defense of human rights, solidarity and the fight against climate change. An example of this synergy between the two states is the Andorran

reception of 387 people displaced by the war in Ukraine, where he highlighted the collaboration between the country and the Vatican with the protocol with the Community of Sant'Egidio for the creation of a humanitarian corridor. Such is the good synergy gathered by the two states and the multitude of common challenges they fa-

Parolin was open to appointing a coadjutor bishop for an optimal transition of Vives

ce that Espot announced the possibility of working in «a coalition of small states where we can join efforts and synergies, precisely, to go further and better in this important challenge facing all of humanity», making specific reference to the fight against climate change. The head of government did not give more details about this initiative, but it would seem that this «coalition of small states» could count on Andorra as one of the main drivers and the Holy See could become part of it. Espot referred to the fight against climate change as one of the missions that this grouping of small states would have, but he emphasized the multiple common challenges that Andorra shares with the Vatican that could also be shared with others small European countries.

Also, Parolin explained with reference to the retirement of Joan Enric Vives, who is already close to the corresponding age range, that the Holy See, which has the exclusive

competence of succession, would have the will to appoint a bishop coadjutor to ensure an optimal transition in the bishopric and the co-principate between Vives and his successor, with whom Parolin argued with some humor that «there are always self-candidates». Even so, a possible extension of the mandate of the current episcopal co-prince would not be ruled out. Also, the Secretary of State of the Vatican alleged that Pope Francis «has the idea» of being able to visit the Principality at some point, but that currently «countries that are in more difficulties» have priority. Finally, both Espot and Parolin shared their satisfaction with the operation of the Concordat signed in 2008 by Andorra and the Holy See, which they consider to have been the result of very intense work and which is currently being applied in their globality and works properly, there being no element to update it, according to the Head of Government and the Secretary of State of the Vatican. ≡

Ensenyat asks for «consensus» during his speech in Meritxell

The general trustee emphasizes the problem of pensions, housing or the European Union

EDUARD COMELLES



►► The syndic general, Carles Ensenyat, during his speech at the Meritxell church.

EL PERIÒDIC
CANILLO

The general trustee, Carles Ensenyat, made his speech yesterday for Meritxell's Day in the Basilica of the National Patron in front of all the general councilors who make up the Andorran parliamentary assembly. During this, Ensenyat testified in front of the representatives of the parliamentary political forces that they must «be able to build consensus on such important issues as: citizens' rights, the protection of our environment, pensions, housing, energy transition or relations with the European Union».

Regarding the speech of the general trustee, several representatives of the different parliamentary groups showed their reaction to Ensenyat's words and Meritxell's day. The first was the social democratic leader, Pere Baró, who declared that «it is very important to all come together to be able to find solutions. Examples like the one on Thursday with the law of extreme urgency, are not the best with the importance of the chamber that always defends itself. We believe that laws must be made jointly, thoughtfully, debated and agreed upon.

Thursday was not the case, we believe that this legislature should be an example of consensus and laws where we can all work and agree.»

Jordi Jordana, president of the democratic parliamentary group, for his part, testified that Ensenyat made «a very positive, institutional and correct speech for the day we live in. I think he has been able to combine the past, our roots and where we come from to know where we are going.»

Carles Naudi, from Ciutadans Compromesos, mentioned that «the syndic in his speech has rubbed off on excellence», in addition to explaining that «we like these values and traditions that Ensenyat has expressed in his speech. We find in this 150th anniversary of Meritxell the symbolism of this tradition, but also of national unity and social cohesion when we all meet here in Meritxell.»

The leader of the opposition, Cerni Escalé, of the Concòrdia parliamentary group, stipulated that «it is Andorra's national day. I think that the trustee's speech indicated it well enough, and that it is a good day to remember that we are a united people, regardless of whether

he has just arrived in the country or whether he has been there all his life». Escalé wanted to express, on this significant day for the country, that «Andorra is the people who live there and its territory. We are at a time when people are beginning to lose our territory, and a country in which people and territory are lost is not a space for identity or solidarity. It is a country that

Escalé encourages strengthening the patriotic spirit and Baró criticizes the emergency law of this past Thursday

cannot survive.» Escalé concluded by saying that «it is a good occasion to strengthen the Andorran patriotic spirit and to remember the challenges we face».

The non-affiliated councilor of Liberals, Victor Pintos, shared his reflection on the speech, characterizing it as «complete, emotional and patriotic, which strengthens the institution» of the General Council. Pintos added that «the division of powers is being carried out with which the chamber represents what it is, and (the trustee) has given us a little about the institution, with a central, important, strategic and historical character».

The leader of Andorra Endavant (AE), Carine Montaner, stated that «the trustee, since he started, has done many things to make the General Council progress, his speech goes along these lines and is fantastic». Montaner explained that the reasons why Ensenyat's words are very positive is that «he puts the General Council back at the center of our institutions, in its place». To finish, Montaner valued «the message that he has said with an outstretched hand and consensus, to put the citizen's concerns on the ta-



CARLES ENSENYAT
GENERAL TRUSTEE

«We must be able to build consensus on issues as relevant as citizens' rights»

PERE BARÓ

P. GROUP SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

«Laws must be made jointly and consensually. On Thursday, with the law of extreme urgency, that was not the case»

JORDI JORDANA

POLITICAL GROUP DEMOCRAT

«(The trustee) has been able to combine the past, our roots and where we come from to know where we want to go»

CARLES NAUDI

CIUTADANS COMPROMESOS

«We find, on this 150th anniversary of Meritxell, the symbolism of this tradition in being all gathered here»

CERNI ESCALÉ

POLITICAL GROUP CONCÒRDIA

«A country in which people and territory are lost is not a space for identity or solidarity»

VICTOR PINTOS

NON-AFFILIATED LIBERAL

«A speech that was complete, very emotional and patriotic, which strengthens the institution of the General Council»

CARINE MONTANER

P. GROUP ANDORRA ENDAVANT

«The trustee has done many things to make the Council progress, his speech went along these lines and it's fantastic»

ble, which is the role of the institution and the councilors».

In conclusion, the reactions regarding the message of the general trustee are quite positive, with a consensus among the various political forces to solve the different challenges of Andorran citizens cooperatively within the institution of the General Council and to be able to reach joint agreements. ■