



POLITICS

DA has no plans to give ministries to Liberals in order to not lose the majority

The people of Espoat are celebrating the victory of the elections, but they are not relaxing

For Serra, PS SDP+'s claim of a change in the electoral system is «disputable»

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Last Tuesday, the headquarters of the Democrats hosted the first post-election assessment of this year. From the hand of the General Secretary of the party, Jaume Serra, the results of the elections were highlighted, which placed Democrats as the first political force with a parliamentary majority of 16 seats out of the 28 that make up the General Council of the Principality. «Victory and a clear and comfortable absolute majority cannot lead us to complacency», said Serra, with full satisfaction that, at the same time, also left room for reflection on the previous elections. «We have dropped 2.47% compared to the last election. We are a clear majority, but we must not relax.»

In relation to possible pacts to begin to shape from now on, Serra was clear in his words: «you cannot overreact on results or change the political spectrum of the Council without first respecting what the polls ha-

Despite the absolute majority, those from Espoat believe that self-criticism is necessary, especially in the case of Sant Julià

ve said». An affirmation with which the General Secretary of the orange party wanted to dispel any doubt about potential alliances with the other political formations that make up the country's government network. Especially with the liberal party of Cabanes, who formed a coalition government with the democrats during this last legislature and of whom Serra thinks that there was a «good, correct and understanding» governance. Some more than positive words for those of Cabanes, but which do not remove those of Espoat from their firm idea: «we will not lose our majority to give a parliamentary majority to the Liberals. To do otherwise would be madness.» A situation that leaves Conxita Marsol and Sandra Codina, first from Andorra la Vella and second from Or-



► Jaume Serra at the headquarters of Democrats, during the press conference last Tuesday.

dino, respectively, castaways, and who are part of the Democrats + Liberals coalition. «His entry into the Council is not ruled out», mentioned Serra.

Following this line, the General Secretary of the party also wanted to pronounce on the party headed by Cerni Escalé, according to Sunday's elections. With an outstretched hand, Serra's reflection was given this time by the differences that have separated them throughout the electoral campaign: «during the campaign, it is normal for people to try to emphasize the differences, but once after this you realize that there are things you can agree on». A vision that leaves the ball on the court of Concordia and is that, as Serra pointed out, «there are decisions that go beyond the four years of the legisla-



JAUME SERRA

GENERAL SECRETARY OF DA

«We will not lose our majority to give the Liberals a parliamentary majority. To do otherwise would be madness»

«Once the campaign is over, you realize that there are things in which you can agree with other political formations»

ture and it is possible that they will structurally affect the country, so it is important to take decisions jointly with other formations».

Those of Pere López, who at the beginning of this last legislature made a claim to change the electoral system in favor of greater proportionality. A frivolous proposal for Democrats, who do not see it possible for «a parliamentary system to be proportional and majoritarian at the same time. It's an attempt to square the circle and any other approach is debatable.» As Serra exemplified, «the electoral system is the result of a political history and tradition, as well as a conception of what Andorra is». A whole declaration of intentions that puts on the table the possibility that all parishes have the same weight when

choosing councilors, a system that bears some resemblance to the English parliamentary system and that would make it so that for every X number of people there were X councilors. Even so, Serra was very clear: «when PS SDP+ had five councilors with a certain representation, they got 20% or 30% cheaper than us. At that time I didn't see them complain so much.»

To finish, Serra wanted to leave room for a brief analysis of what happened in Sant Julià de Lòria, the only parish that did not take the orange party away and was imposed by Concòrdia. «Recognizing ignorance should not be shameful and it is clear that something has been done wrong if we have not won», concluded the General Secretary of Democrats. ≡

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«We have participated in projects in countries such as Madagascar, Afghanistan or Ukraine»

ALBERT MORA Director of UNICEF Andorra

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Albert Mora has been director of the UNICEF Andorra Committee since February 2021. Before that, Mora had worked in several private multinationals. When he was presented with the opportunity to take up his current responsibilities at UNICEF, he happily accepted and has been in the position for two years now.

–How does UNICEF Andorra work?

–The Andorran committee is one of the 33 that UNICEF has distributed around the world. Here in the country, it is an Andorran association that has signed a cooperation agreement with UNICEF, as a United Nations agency. The committee was created by Manela Mora in 1984. What it does is, as a result of this cooperation agreement, collection for UNICEF projects within the Andorran territory. And also, we disseminate and take actions in favor of children's rights in Andorra.

–How is the relationship with UNICEF International?

–The legal bond we have is this cooperation agreement. With this, we can use the UNICEF name to collect, and we can use all the material, the logo, and present ourselves as a UNICEF committee. Our work focuses, above all, on raising money to be able to finance projects carried out by UNICEF around the world, and also on carrying out this task of raising awareness for children. UNICEF is very pleased that a country as small as Andorra can have a committee and can have a voice in favor of children here in our country.

–What are the main projects you develop in Andorra and internationally?

–Each year we finance between two and three international projects. This past year, we started with an eco-village project in the south of Madagascar, an area very affected by drought, where UNICEF decided to set up a network of 20 eco-villages, which what they do is to concentrate all the infrastructure of water and sanitation, as well as solar energy. Of these 20 towns, we will finance one, in its entirety, from Andorra.

Another project that we started last year and that we will continue this year, is the contribution of a project for gender equality in Afghanistan. Since the Taliban returned to power in August 2022, the situation of women has worsened significantly. What we finance is access to school materials, centers where women can go when they are victims of an episode of domestic and gender violence, give them training and advice, be able to help them develop more as people. It is a country that is in a deep economic crisis. What we find is that UNICEF, in addition, must give aid to hunger, because there is a food crisis. And in these situations, children are the ones who suffer the most. Also in the drought situation, since in these places where they depend so much on the most traditional agriculture, with the fact that there is a lack of water, crops grow less, families become poorer, they have less means to subsist, and boys and girls are more likely to stop going to school in order to contribute (to the household), there are more marriages of convenience and the daughter is seen as a source of income. In other words, drought and children's rights are closely related.

Last year we also financed a project in Bhutan for the integration of disabled children. By cultural tradition, they are marginalized, and we managed to finance a network of inclusive schools, teacher training, a sign language program in Bhutanese, achieving an improvement in the situation of children in that country.

We also campaigned heavily for the war in Ukraine since it started. We were able to raise a lot of funds to help, UNICEF has spent more than 1 billion dollars in Ukraine in 2022, and these years we would also like to be able to raise a lot to be able to help the situation, as it is very complicated.

This year we are with the project of the earthquake in Syria and Turkey, because it is the most recent. When there is an earthquake like this, the first thing that happens is that the electricity and water don't work, the distribution of food is interrupted and families stop having income. Then it becomes very difficult to survive. With UNICEF's 75 years of experience, we provide experts on how to solve these types of crises and materi-



▶▶ Albert Mora, director of the UNICEF Andorra committee.

al that helps, specifically, in these situations.

–What is the 2030 Agenda and what are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

–The SDGs are 17 goals that were signed at the level of the United Nations, to be achieved before 2030, focused on 17 topics. They are a guide and help to define milestones to allow societies to advance in their improvement. For example; in ODS 13 (Climate Action), we want to advocate that all countries, including Andorra, take action to alleviate the effects of climate change. And even if it seems that it is not affecting us, climate change crosses borders, and everything that the country can do, is helping the whole world to achieve this SDG. The same with ODS 5 (Gender Equality), since we defend not only a project like the one in Afghanistan, but also here in Andorra. So that there is greater awareness of the rights of girls and women, and that society also achieves greater levels of gender equality. Another issue that, for UNICEF, is very important is ODS 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), which even if it seems that here in the Principality there is a lot of water and that it is not a problem, it is already a very big challenge in many parts of the world in Catalonia, where there is a very se-

vere drought, investments in infrastructure are already being considered to alleviate it. UNICEF defends and promotes children's rights across the planet and, as such, has a global view of all the challenges that lie ahead. For this reason, the ODS are relevant to us because it is a way of having the same goal to improve, on a scale of all the countries of the world.

–Is there a priority around specific SDGs or should we try to fulfill them all equally?

–All are important. Let's see who dares to say that education is more important than water. Or that underwater life is more important than zero hunger. It is very difficult. They are very interactive. For example; if we influence education, I'm sure everyone will recognize that we can influence gender equality. And if we focus on gender equality, we are talking about equality in health. They are all very interrelated.

–How is Agenda 2030 evolving in Andorra according to UNICEF?

–We believe that many actions are being taken in favor of the ODS. We are aware of the fact that, for example, (public) budgets have been made in accordance with a grouping of ODS. There are other initiatives that

have also been made based on the ODS. I think you can say that progress is being made. More can always be done, but we believe that, overall, progress is being made.

–What do you think the results will be in 2030, both in Andorra and internationally?

–The very fact that we have the ODS and can move towards them is already a result in itself. There are things that are more tangible than others, but what seems very important to us is that the great power of the ODS is and will continue to be, its ability to communicate. And as a tangible fact, the objectives of improving the planet. For example, with climate change, the ODS indicators, will we have achieved it by 2030? It's very difficult to say, it's seven years away, it's not looking good. But the fact that we are aware first, and that we fight to get there, makes it more possible that we can actually get to the problem.

–What is the relationship you have with the country's schools?

–We work very closely with schools and the Ministries of Education, Social Affairs and Foreign Affairs. With Education, we collaborated on a study of the use of technology. In addition, we have collaborated with Andorra Research and Innovation (ARI) to create the Children's Observatory for 11 years. We also have the Children's Councils program, where all the schools participate with the municipalities. And last year, we started with the network of UNICEF friendly schools. I have already signed an agreement with two schools. The first was Sant Ermengol, then the Andorran School of Santa Coloma. With this agreement, the schools undertake to disseminate UNICEF's action among their students and, in addition, to one day carry out a collection action in favor of the entity. We also go to schools to hold workshops to disseminate children's rights and spread our general activity. For example, we did this recently at the British College of Andorra, where they also made a donation for the earthquake in Syria and Turkey. Or the Lycée, which helped us collect books for St George's Day this year. We have this relationship and affinity with all the schools. ≡

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