

Ash Regan says she will address the democratic deficit on independence

Ash Regan has announced that she is standing in the SNP leadership contest.

Ms Regan is the MSP for Edinburgh Eastern, and was a Minister in the Scottish Cabinet until her resignation at the end of 2022 over the Gender Reform Recognition Bill.

Ms Regan proposes to take forward the matter of independence by setting up an independence convention involving all pro-independence parties and organisations, think tank and civil society in a new campaign body to seek and gain independence.

Ms Regan explained: “Since the independence referendum in 2014 the SNP has secured overwhelming victories in three general elections and two Holyrood

elections. We have won the democratic right to have another referendum but every time we have asked Westminster for a section 30 order, it has been declined.

“This is a democratic deficit, only compounded by the Supreme Court Ruling in November that the Scottish Parliament does not have the legal right to hold a referendum. We can only hold one if it is granted by Westminster. However despite multiple requests, the Westminster Government has not stated under what conditions the Section 30 order would ever be granted. It is quite clear that the Westminster Government will not allow us to pursue our path to self determination under any circumstances.”

The second candidate to declare that she is standing for election as leader of the SNP and the First Minister following Nicola Sturgeon’s resignation, Regan says she will “create a new vision of an independent Scotland” by creating coalitions, and reaching out across all of society to secure a pro-independence majority. She claims such a majority could not then be ignored.

The MSP is nominated by Joanna Cherry, KC ,MP, who said that she looks forward to “an open and respectful debate about our future policy direction and independence strategy”. She really hopes for televised hustings. The deadline for any other nominations is Friday of this week.

In a statement issued this morning the former Community Safety minister said: “The path to independence also lies in strong, effective government. As First Minister I will focus on the nation’s priorities: NHS recovery, the cost of living crisis, the economy, creating high value jobs, education and the

environment.

“My cabinet would be comprised of the very best people and in the right roles. They will be empowered to run their own briefs, and expected to deliver for the people of Scotland. With competency we win trust and with trust we advance towards self-determination.

“I propose that we take control of the process towards independence ourselves. If pro-independence parties, with a clear mandate for such actions in their manifestos, have more than 50%+1 of the votes cast in a Westminster or Holyrood election this will be a clear instruction that Scotland wishes to be an independent nation. We will invite the Westminster Government to the Scottish Government to commence negotiations and set a time frame for Scotland’s withdrawal from the UK.

“These proposals will be taken to conference for consideration.

“No ifs, no buts. Independence – nothing less.”

In a statement this morning Health Secretary Humza Yousaf has also announced his candidacy who has been backed by Neil Gray, the Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development.



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