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## **EFA MEPs welcome Catalan politicians**

### **Recently released political prisoners visit the European Parliament**

EFA MEPs welcomed Catalan politicians Oriol Junqueras, Raul Romeva, Carme Forcadell and Dolors Bassa to the European Parliament in Strasbourg this week.

The four former members of the Catalan government were recently released after four years in prison, having been sentenced by Spanish authorities for their role in Catalonia's peaceful and democratic bid for self-determination in 2017.

Oriol Junqueras and Raul Romeva are both former MEPs in the Greens/EFA group. Junqueras had been re-elected to the European Parliament in 2019, but Spanish authorities prevented him from taking up his seat, despite his enjoying immunity as an MEP. He was subsequently elected President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament.



Meeting MEPs in Strasbourg they reminded them that the Spanish state continues to deny Catalonia's right to self-determination and pursues a form of judicial repression against those who fight for Catalonia's right to decide. Whilst they have been pardoned, this is conditional and does not extend to other exiled Catalan politicians.

Spain's Court of Auditors is also currently pursuing Catalan politicians – including EFA MEPs Jordi Solé and Diana Riba and more than 40 others – for millions of Euros, seen by many as a form of economic harassment.

Whilst the political conflict between Catalonia and Spain is far from over, it is hoped that the release of political prisoners will provide new impetus for dialogue so that a negotiated way forward can be achieved. For the Catalans, they are clear that they will never give up on their legitimate right to peacefully and democratically decide their own constitutional future.

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### **Responsible MEPs**



François Alfonsi

Member



Diana Riba i Giner

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group



Jordi Solé

Member

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