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Petitions Committee Vice-Chair will not take part in fact-finding mission to Spain

EFA MEP Tatjana Ždanoka explains in a letter why it's 'unacceptable' to take part

Greens/EFA MEP and First Vice-Chair of the European Parliament's Petitions Committee **Tatjana Ždanoka** has announced that she will not take part in the Committee's forthcoming fact-finding visit to Spain.

In a letter, Ms Ždanoka said that she finds it 'unacceptable' to take part. She explained that *"the whole process of the preparation of the visit was done in complete contradiction of the Rules of Procedure and the PETI guidelines."*

She added *"As a member of the Basque Peace Process Friendship group in the European Parliament since its creation in 2004, I am extremely wary of any attempts to derail the peace process and use the painful issue of victims of terrorism to play political games. To my regret, the programme of the visit seems to bear clear signs of trying to do just that. All proposals to modify the programme submitted by our group (as well as other groups) were rejected."*

The full text of the letter follows below:

Brussels, 25 October 2021

To whom it may concern

With this letter I would like to declare that I find it unacceptable for me as a Greens/EFA MEP and First Vice-Chair of the PETI Committee **to take part** in the PETI fact-finding visit to Spain scheduled for 3-5 November 2021 (based on Petition 1525/2016 on the actions taken regarding 379 cases of unsolved murders perpetrated by ETA) and, moreover, **to act as Head of Delegation** (as proposed by the PETI Secretariat some days ago).

The whole process of the preparation of the visit was done in complete contradiction of the Rules of Procedure and the PETI guidelines. In fact, Rule 228, par. 2 of the Rules of Procedure states the following: ***“Members elected in the Member State of destination shall not be part of the delegation. They may be allowed to accompany the fact-finding visit delegation in an ex officio capacity”***. According to the PETI guidelines, ***“The Secretariat, in cooperation with the members of the delegation, creates a programme and a set of proposals which define the objectives of the visit. The programme is discussed and approved by the Coordinators”***.

After having expressed a long time ago my interest in taking part in the aforementioned visit, I had no possibility to take part in the creation of the draft programme and the set of proposals which define the objectives of the visit. Moreover, the list of members of the delegation completed by the Secretariat and submitted to the Coordinators meeting on 30th of September contained the name of Dolores Montserrat (MEP elected in Spain) as the Head of Delegation.

As a member of the Basque Peace Process Friendship group in the European Parliament since its creation in 2004, I am extremely wary of any attempts to derail the peace process and use the painful issue of victims of terrorism to play political games. To my regret, the programme of the visit seems to bear clear signs of trying to do just that. All proposals to modify the programme submitted by our group (as well as other groups) were rejected.

Tatjana Ždanoka

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