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Press release | 10.12.2009

Backing for Catalan 'people power'

EFA press release

MEPs from Corsica, Flanders and Wales will be in Catalonia this weekend to act as observers for the series of local referendums taking place on Catalan independence.

A grassroots initiative has used existing powers to organise a series of local referendums at town and municipal level in order to give people a say on Catalonia's constitutional future.

MEPs François Alfonsi (Corsica), Frieda Brepoels (Flanders) and Jill Evans (Wales) will be in Catalonia at the invitation of Catalan MEP **Oriol Junqueras** from Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya.

Junqueras explained:

"These referendums are a superb example of popular democracy in action and my party has been pleased to support this initiative. An individual referendum will take place in 168 towns and villages across Catalonia and more than 700,000 people will have the right to vote. This has been organised in spite of the total opposition of the Spanish government and shows what we as Catalans can achieve through grass roots campaigning.

"We are pleased to welcome politicians and others from around the world to see democracy in action - Catalan style."

Welsh MEP and EFA Group President **Jill Evans** said:

"There is a vital democratic element currently missing in the relationship between the EU and the people of Europe, and that is the right for self-determination. We must look beyond the Member State level to the peoples of Europe. I believe Europe is changing. Sunday will be a historic day that shows what people can achieve despite government opposition. The Spanish government will not be able to ignore the result of these referendums and Europe must respond."

Corsican MEP **François Alfonsi** said:

"These referendums are important not only for Catalonia but for other nations and regions who want the right to be consulted about their constitutional future. Of course the political and constitutional circumstances vary from place to place, but the power of popular democracy cannot be diminished. We will watch and learn with interest."

Flemish MEP **Frieda Brepoels** added:

"This initiative has inspired interest around Europe and beyond. Other European governments should learn the lesson that they deny people's right to have a say on their country's future at their peril. The simple fact that this is happening is a victory for people power and I am very pleased to have an opportunity to see this initiative for myself."

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Responsible MEPs



Jill Evans

Member

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