EFA logo

en

Press release | 14.01.2014

Basque Political Prisoners - latest developments

Statement by Aralar MEP Inaki Irazabalbeitia

Last Tuesday when we decided to call this press conference in order to give our opinion on the document released by the Basque Political Prisoners Collective last December, 28th, we were aware of the demonstration that had been called for last Saturday in support of Basque prisoners. However, we did not expect what happened in the meantime, the chain of nonsense actions that led, finally, to the big demonstration on Saturday in Bilbao.

The document of the Basque Political Prisoners Collective comes in response to the demands of the Social Forum for Peace held last spring. In the document three very important ideas are stated:

1. Prisoners recognise the damage they caused.
2. They compromise to use exclusively democratic and peaceful ways to develop their political work and refuse to use the methods of the past.
3. They accept the current legal means to be released out of prison in both an individual and a gradual way.

This last point is really important because it represents a change in the strategy of the Collective so far they refused to such solutions in the past and they were critical to the prisoners who accepted individual procedures to get out of prison.

The statement of the Collective is a real step forward in the peace process in the Basque Country. A unilateral step, anyway. It deserved to have had a positive answer by the Spanish Government.

None of that happened. The Spanish Government has reacted to the contrary. The steps taken have been in the direction of stressing the peace process, in other words, steps back.

1. The operation of the Civil Guard last week arresting lawyers and representatives of Basque prisoners.
2. The ban on the demonstration for the rights of Basque prisoners, which is traditionally called for the second Saturday of January.

Neither of those actions makes sense if you want to progress in the resolution of the Basque conflict; even more, after the release of the document of the Basque Political Prisoners Collective. It seems that the Spanish government moves to obstruct, complicate or impede an orderly end of ETA.

We firmly denounce the negative attitude of the Spanish Government towards the resolution, since it is neither wise nor democratic. We demand the Spanish government changes its attitude, and takes positive steps in order to both promote the peace process in the Basque Country and to resolve the Basque conflict in a dialogued and democratic way.

We insist on the European authorities to get involved in the resolution of the last armed conflict in the European Union and to intervene with the Spanish Government demanding it to change its attitude towards the peace process.

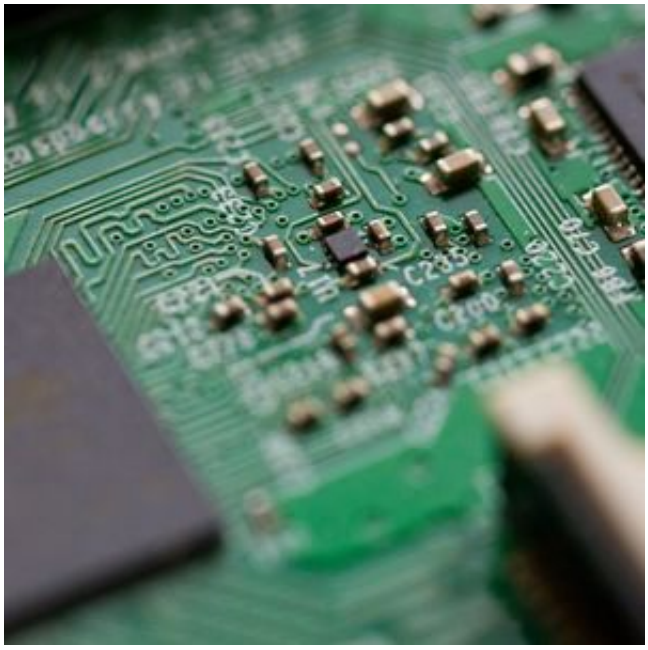
Finally, we congratulate the Basque citizens for their sensible and worthy answer given to the provocation, which led to a ban on the demonstration in support of Basque prisoners. Last Saturday Basque citizens came out clearly against the blockade of the peace process, as far as more than 110,000 people gathered behind the slogan 'Human Rights. Resolution. Peace' in the streets of Bilbao.

We hope that both the Spanish Government and the European authorities will take into account the clearly expressed will of Basque citizens in favour of a peaceful resolution of Basque conflict.

Recommended

Press release

chris-ried



Digital Fairness Act falls short on addictive design

11.11.2026

Press release

Redek Kozak



Czech public media under attack - with Markéta Gregoro…

11.11.2026

Press release

Sebastian P



Commission must overhaul EU Democracy Shield

15.09.2026

Study

©abraham osorio



REFORMING FRONTEX | A HUMAN RIGHTS - BASED REVIEW

01.07.2026

Please share

- E-Mail