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Celtic United Front on UK EU Referendum

EFA Press release from Alyn Smith (SNP) & Jill Evans (Plaid Cymru)

MEPs **Alyn Smith**, **Martina Anderson** and **Jill Evans** representing the SNP, Sinn Fein and Plaid Cymru have today (Wednesday) intervened in a European Parliament debate on the EU proposals which may form a basis for agreement to be presented by the UK Prime Minster in a referendum on EU membership.

All agreed that a possible June referendum, in the event the UK can agree a deal with the other member states, would be disrespectful of elections in May to Holyrood, Stormont and the Senedd, and give insufficient time for a proper campaign. All three also agreed that Scotland, the North of Ireland and Wales must not be removed from the EU against their democratic will.

Alyn Smith MEP said:

"We have elections in May and a fundamentally different set of attitudes to EU issues, and a June referendum would be disrespectful of democracy in our countries.

"We in Scotland were in our own referendum promised by the Prime Minister that the UK is a 'family of nations' and we are fully entitled to expect that to be respected now.

"Scotland has a different politics and a different attitude to the EU. If, as I expect, a majority of Scots vote to remain in the EU, it would be a democratic outrage for us to be removed from the EU against our will."

Martina Anderson MEP said:

"Sinn Féin wants to see the creation of a social Europe, a Europe with democracy at its core and a Europe that is closer to citizens.

"The north should have a its own referendum, calculated and counted separately and the outcome respected.

"The result of an English referendum should not be imposed on the people of the North of Ireland."

Jill Evans MEP said:

"I represent Wales and EU membership has brought us positive economic, social and cultural benefits. I also believe that the EU has benefitted from having Wales as a member.

"There is a great deal about the EU I would like to change. But we can only do that by working with our European partners - to improve policy and make the EU more effective and more responsive.

"We are far better off working for change from within than shouting from the side-lines.

"The UK Government wants more subsidiarity. So do I. Which is why the proposed changes to be discussed in Council must too be fully considered in terms of their impact on the devolved governments of the UK. There must be a proper debate involving those governments and I regret the UK government has not done that to date. It's a matter of democracy and fairness.

"My party, Plaid Cymru, is committed to remaining in the EU. I believe the majority of people in Wales want that too.

"And if Wales votes to remain in, we should not be dragged out against our democratic will. That is why we have called for a mandate to leave only if the four constituent parts of the UK agree to leave.

"I want to really engage people in an open, honest, fact-based and mature debate because it's a decision that will affect many generations to come."

Watch the exchange of views here: http://efa.greens-efa.eu/uk-s-eu-membership-alyn-smith-and-jill-evans-15151.html

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Responsible MEPs

Jill Evans

Member

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