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# Concerns over situation in Catalonia

## Statement from EFA MEPs J-M Terricabras & Jordi Solé (Catalonia)

The European Parliament has this week heard concerns about the situation in Catalonia following the independence referendum held on 1 October.

The Spanish authorities are preparing to suspend the democratically elected Catalan government and impose direct rule from Madrid. Two civil society leaders who support the right to self-determination have been arrested and imprisoned and the Spanish government has rejected calls for dialogue.

Catalan MEP and President of the EFA Group in the Parliament, **Josep-Maria Terricabras** spoke in a European Parliament debate with European Council President Donald Tusk.

**Josep-Maria Terricabras** said:

*"We can all agree that the situation in Catalonia is serious. But I feel that the European Union has made a series of mistakes in dealing with the situation. The subject didn't even feature on the agenda of the most recent European Council meeting.*

*"It is claimed that this is an internal matter, but Catalonia is within the European Union. The European Commission has applauded the proposals of the Spanish government to supplant democracy in Catalonia and impose direct rule from Madrid, as if Catalonia were a colony.*

*"Are you applauding the overthrow of democracy? How is that possible?*

*"As an MEP, I feel profoundly let down by the President of this Parliament. Just like the King of Spain he has given up the role of impartial mediator. I appeal to the President to discuss and mediate with all MEPs about the various options, and not just with Spanish MEPs.*

*"Is it any wonder that the Catalan people, who are historically some of the most pro-European, now have grave doubts about the direction that Europe is taking in this matter. Is this a Europe that is concerned about its citizens, about democracy and about diversity? It certainly doesn't seem that way from a Catalan perspective."*

Catalan MEP **Jordi Sole** said:

*"Catalan civil society leaders Jordi Sánchez and Jordi Cuixart have now spent over a week in jail. More than a week deprived of their liberty, arbitrarily accused of something they haven't done. Political prisoners in the 21st century.*

*"Because they are not in jail for what they have done (mobilizing hundreds of thousands of people in an exemplary and always responsible way), but for what they represent and what they think. While well-known corrupt figures can just go about their business.*

*"If truth and justice mattered, they would be free. But how will the truth matter, if even the Spanish foreign minister allows himself to state, with all the brazenness in the world, that many of the images of police violence on October 1 are 'fake news'? All that matters is punishing a country that has dared to vote. A country that, despite the challenges, has dared to exercise the internationally recognized right to self-determination.*

*"And Europe, are you concerned about the truth? Do you care about fundamental rights in the EU? Or does it only matter when it concerns distant countries and distant situations?"*

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**Responsible MEPs**



Jordi Solé i Ferrando

Member



Josep Maria Terricabras

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

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