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European Day of Languages

An EFA press release by MEP Oriol Junqueras (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya)

Ahead of European Day of Languages (Sunday 26 September), MEPs from the EFA Group in the European Parliament have renewed calls for languages such as Catalan and Welsh to be fully recognised at European level.

Oriol Junqueras (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya) wants the European institutions and in particular the European Parliament to fully implement accords giving rights to Catalan and Welsh speakers amongst others.

In particular, there is concern at the European Parliament's failure to make progress that would allow MEPs to use the so called 'co-official' languages during parliamentary debates.

Catalan MEP Oriol Junqueras commented: ***"We've been fighting hard to ensure that European languages such as Catalan, and Welsh are given equality with other languages at European level. Much progress has been made, and people are now able to correspond with most EU institutions in these languages and receive a reply in their own language.***

"Unfortunately the European Parliament continues to drag its feet on this matter because of political pressure, mostly from the Spanish right. The practical issues have been dealt with and there's really no excuse for delaying this any further. I hope that by the next European Day of Languages we will be able to celebrate full interpretation for our languages in debates of the European Parliament.

"The Spanish government signed up to institutional agreements in 2005 to improve the status of Catalan at EU level and they are failing to honour their commitments.

"It is completely unacceptable that, for example, Catalan speaking MEPs are still unable to use our language during European Parliament debates. Catalan is spoken by over ten million Europeans, and we deserve to have our linguistic rights fully recognised and respected at EU level."

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