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Inclusion is key to resolve Nagorno-Karabakh dispute

Press release from EFA MEP Josep-Maria Terricabras (Catalonia)

Speaking as the European Parliament debates the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, **Josep-Maria Terricabras**, President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament, called for the legitimate representatives of the people of the territory to be included in the negotiations about its future.

*MEP Josep-Maria Terricabras*

Nagorno-Karabakh is an enclave within Azerbaijan, which declared its independence in 1991, and is backed by Armenia. There has been a recent resurgence in the previously frozen conflict with more than sixty people killed and many wounded.

MEPs in Strasbourg will debate the situation with the EU's Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini on Tuesday amid calls for the EU to assist in mitigating the crisis.

Speaking ahead of the debate, **Josep-Maria Terricabras** said:

"On 10 December 1991, the vast majority of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh voted for independence in a referendum.

"The response to this democratic process was a military offensive by Azerbaijan, with more than 30 000 dead. Subsequently a ceasefire between Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia was signed.

"The creation of the Minsk Group in 1992 was a breakthrough, but Azerbaijan has refused to implement a true international mechanism for monitoring violations of the ceasefire.

"Nagorno-Karabakh has fully democratic institutions, an exemplary judicial system and low levels of corruption.

"For this reason we request the inclusion of representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh in the negotiations of the Minsk Group, precisely because they decide the future of the country's inhabitants.

"Once the military conflict is resolved it will be necessary to agree a procedure to properly recognise the new independent state at international level."

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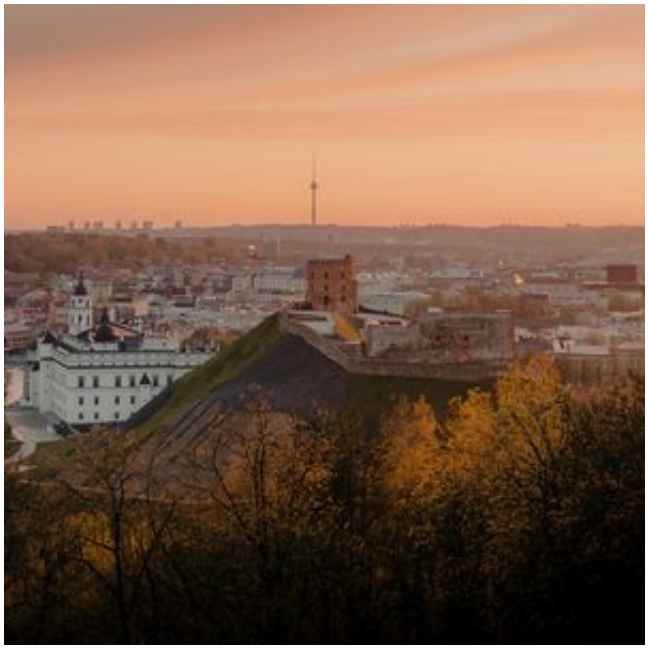
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Josep Maria Terricabras

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

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