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MEPs call for dialogue in Catalan situation

Press release from EFA MEPs J-M Terricabras & Jordi Solé

Nearly 50 MEPs from across the political spectrum have today signed a letter to Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy 'to express our deep concern regarding the situation in Catalonia, which has reached a critical point.'

The MEPs are critical of the 'repressive actions' of the Spanish authorities in recent days, 'against civil servants, MPs, mayors, media, companies and citizens'.

Catalonia will hold a referendum on independence from Spain on 1 October but the MEPs are highly critical of the Spanish authorities' response which has included arresting and detaining high-ranking Catalan government officials, as well as armed police raiding Catalan Government ministries.

They insist that the actions of the Spanish authorities are contrary to EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and call for Mr. Rajoy to backtrack immediately.

Finally they call upon the Spanish government to enter into a dialogue with the Catalan authorities.

In their letter, the MEPs write:

Brussels, 22nd of September 2017

Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey,

President of the Government of Spain

As elected Members of the European Parliament, we would like to express our deep concern regarding the situation in Catalonia, which has reached a critical point.

The repressive actions and threats carried out by the Spanish authorities, mainly the Spanish police, against civil servants, MPs, mayors, media, companies and citizens during these last few days are not only a violation of basic fundamental rights but a wrong approach to handle a political question.

We are aware that 14 high-ranking government officials have been arrested by the Guardia Civil, and 5 Ministries of the Catalan Government have been raided, de facto Catalonia lives under an undeclared état de siege that goes against the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

These actions are unacceptable and we demand you to backtrack immediately.

The separation of powers is the cornerstone of any democratic society and the use of judiciary and legal action to deal with a matter of a political nature is a mistake and an abuse and misuse of power.

Politicians, not judges or police forces, should primarily deal with political disagreements in any European democratic country.

The debates in the Catalan Parliament to call a referendum on independence that has a wide support from the Catalan population cannot lead to a court case being brought by the Spanish government against its President and bureau. Thus, these breaches of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly are not acceptable in the European Union democratic standards, so it is our duty, as Members of the European Parliament, representing European citizens, to condemn these disproportionate reactions from the Spanish authorities to the political legitimate claim of Catalan society for a self-determination referendum. We call the Spanish government to stop its repressive actions immediately, stop violating civil rights and play a constructive role and engage, immediately, in a political dialogue with the Catalan authorities.

Yours sincerely,

MEP Jordi Solé (Greens/EFA), MEP Josep-Maria Terricabras (Greens/EFA), MEP Ramon Tremosa (ALDE), Monika Vana (Greens/ALE), Mark Demesmaeker (ECR), Sander Loones (ECR), Helga Stevens (ECR), Bart Staes (Greens/ALE), Ernest Urtasun (Greens/ALE), Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL), Barbara Lochbihler (Greens/ALE), Fabio de Masi (GUE/NGL), Maria Heubuch (Greens/ALE), Rina Ronja Kari (GUE/NGL), Margrete Auken (Greens/ALE), Indrek Tarand (Greens/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao (ALDE), Lídia Senra Rodríguez (GUE/NGL), Tania González Peñas (GUE/NGL), Miguel Urban Crespo (GUE/NGL), Estefanía Torres Martínez (GUE/NGL), Xabier Benito Ziluaga (GUE/NGL), María Dolores Sánchez Caldentey (GUE/NGL), Josu Juaristi (GUE/NGL), Merja Kyllönen (GUE/NGL), Jussi Halla-Aho (ECR), José Bové (Greens/ALE), Pascal Durand (Greens/ALE), Hans-Olaf Henkel (ECR), Benedek Jávor (Greens/ALE), Matt Carthy (GUE/NGL), Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL), Liadh Ni Riada (GUE/NGL), Lynn Boylan (GUE/NGL), Barbara Spinelli (GUE/NGL), David Borrelli (EFDD), Petras Austrevicius (ALDE), Tatjana Zdanoka (Greens/ALE), Ana Gomes (S&D), Renate Weber (ALDE), Bodil Valero (Greens/ALE), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE), Igor Soltes (Greens/ALE), Jill Evans (Greens/ALE), Molly Scott (Greens/ALE), Jean Lambert (Greens/ALE), Ulrike Müller (ALDE)

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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

Attached documents

Letter_Mr Rajoy_Final.pdf

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