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Press release | 16.09.2010

MEPs statement on ETA announcement

EFA press release

A group of Members of the European Parliament have released a statement calling for the European Union and the Spanish and French governments to seize the historic opportunities presented by ETA's recent announcement of a cessation to armed activity.
Several MEPs set up the Basque Friendship Group in the European Parliament several years ago in order to promote EU backing for a peaceful resolution of the decades old conflict.
Members of the group met in Brussels this week. The MEPs included **François Alfonsi** (PNC, Corsica), **Frieda Brepoels** (N-VA, Flanders), **Oriol Junqueras** (ERC, Catalonia) - all from the EFA parliamentary group - and Bairbre de Brun (Sinn Fein, Ireland) from the GUE group.
In their statement the MEPs call for the Spanish and French governments to suspend exceptional tribunals and for the EU institutions to fully support the peace process.
The full statement reads:
Friendship Group statement on ETA announcement
We want to welcome very warmly the decision of ETA announcing the indefinite cessation of armed actions. It is important to note the unilateral and unconditional nature of this cessation.
We believe this decision is a very important step forward in the creation of necessary conditions to build up an inclusive peace process, making it irreversible.
The EU needs to recognise the importance and significance of this historic step. A step that gives the opportunity to end the last ongoing armed conflict in Europe.
We, as a friendship towards a peace process in the Basque Country, commit ourselves once again to continue working to create a peaceful and democratic permanent scenario in the Basque Country.
In order to make this possible we ask for special commitment to:
1. Spanish and French governments: to act with historical responsibility and suspend the exceptional tribunals, and all indictments and measures against Basque political parties and representatives. In order to create necessary dialogue and negotiation among the parties, the rights of every party have to be equally respected. We ask Spanish and French governments to respect civil, political and human rights for all Basque citizens without exception. The commitment of Abertzale Left to exclusively peaceful, political and democratic means and towards the Mitchell Principles as guidelines for multiparty talks necessarily demands the unbanning of this political movement.
2. All Basque political and social actors to get involved in an inclusive peace process that being base on dialogue and negotiation would find necessary agreements on the resolution of the Basque conflict.
3. Taking into account the resolution on the Basque peace process adopted by the EU parliament on October 2006, we ask the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European Council to act consequently, getting involved in the process and promoting it in order to make it a success. A process that should guarantee the right of the Basques to decide their future freely. Respect for this decision on the part of the Spanish, French and European institutions is the fundamental key to achieving and endurable and stable peace and democracy in the Basque Country.
4. Taking into account the Brussels Declaration, we ask international community to respond constructively

helping on the creation of a peaceful and democratic scenario in the Basque Country.
Friendship Group.
European Parliament, 15th September 2010.

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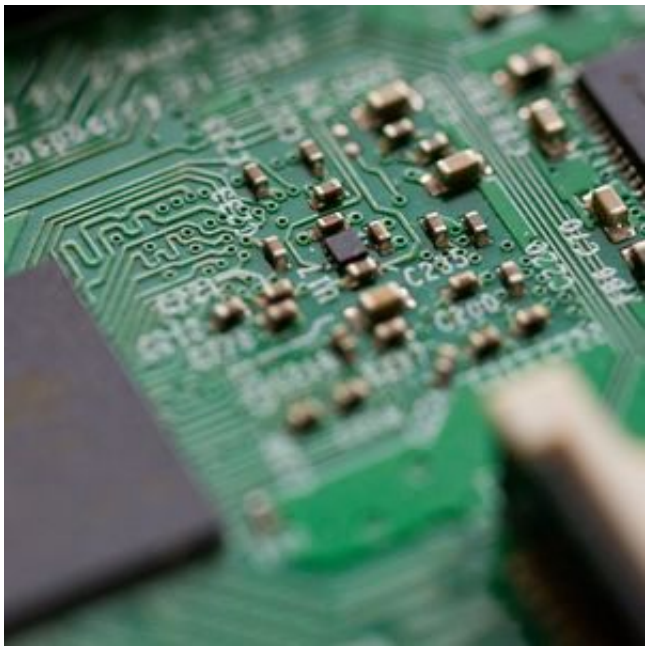


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