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Press release | 29.09.2015

MEPs welcome Juncker's reply on Catalan independence

Press release from EFA MEPs Josep-Maria Terricabras & Ernest Maragall

- 'it is not for the Commission to express a position on questions of internal organisation related to the constitutional arrangements of a particular Member State' - Juncker





MEPs Terricabras and Maragall

EFA MEPs **Josep-Maria Terricabras** and **Ernest Maragall** have welcomed a clarification from European Commission President Jean Claude Juncker concerning a Parliamentary question on Catalan independence.

The EFA MEPs along with Ramon Tremosa of ALDE had asked for clarification after two substantially different answers were published giving the Commission's view, one in English and one in Spanish.

This was in the run-up to Sunday's Catalan elections seen as a de-facto vote on independence. Pro-independence parties won an absolute majority of seats in the Catalan parliament.

In English, the President of the EU Commission simply replied *'it is not for the Commission to express a position on questions of internal organisation related to the constitutional arrangements of a particular Member State'.* But the Spanish translation mysteriously added a nine line paragraph saying that it is not for a regional parliament to decide on the fate of its territory.

Whilst the Commission confirmed last week that the English version was the authentic one, President Juncker has now written to the MEPs to clarify that the differing versions was due to a clerical error. He has further put on record a revised Spanish translation which deletes the mysteriously added paragraph.

Now both versions simply say: *'it is not for the Commission to express a position on questions of internal organisation related to the constitutional arrangements of a particular Member State' / 'No le corresponde a la Comisión manifestar su opinión sobre cuestiones de organización interna relacionadas con las disposiciones constitucionales de un Estado miembro en particular.'*

President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament and Catalan MEP **Josep-Maria Terricabras** said:

"It is vital that the EU remains neutral in the Catalan process towards independence.

"That's why I welcome this quick response from President Juncker acknowledging that mistakes have been made and setting the record straight. He has now stated quite clearly in English and Spanish, that it is not for the Commission to express a position.

"The Catalan Republic will be a member State of the European Union, we are European citizens and we will remain so".

Ends

Note – President Juncker's reply is copied below:

Brussels, 29 SEP. 2015

Dear Honourable Members,

Thank you for your letter of 24 September 2015.

The Commission's reply to the written question N. E-011776/15 has been sent to the Parliament on 28 September 2015.

I enclose a copy of the Spanish and English versions of the reply. The difference between the English and the Spanish texts sent to the Parliament on 21 September 2015 was due to a clerical error by the services of the Secretariat-General of the Commission. This has now been corrected.

Let me reiterate that it is not for the Commission to express a position on questions of internal organisation related to the constitutional arrangements of a particular Member State.

Yours sincerely

Jean-Claude Juncker

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Responsible MEPs



Ernest Maragall



Josep Maria Terricabras

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

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