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Press release | 19.01.2016

Situation in Poland - the Silesian minority

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

President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament, **Josep-Maria Terricabras**, intervened in a debate about the situation in Poland to raise the issue of the country's Silesian minority and the denial of minority rights.

The debate was held at the European Parliament in Strasbourg in the presence of Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydlo and focussed on the state of the rule of law in Poland, following the election of the right wing Law and Justice (PiS) party government last autumn.



President of the EFA Group Josep-Maria Terricabras MEP

Of particular concern is the new government's refusal to recognise Poland's Silesian people as a national minority.

Speaking in the debate, Mr Terricabras said:

"I am speaking as President of the EFA Group in this Parliament.

"In 2011, during the last official census in Poland, 847 000 people declared they had Silesian identity.

"Only four days ago, Jerzy Gorzelik called, on behalf of over 140 000 people, for the recognition of Silesians as an ethnic minority in Poland.

"During a debate in the Polish Parliament on this issue, the ruling party MPs threatened Silesians with persecution and even executions.

"Silesians are still not listed in the law of national and ethnic minorities and on the regional languages of 2005. This is a very alarming and distressing situation.

"Are we standing in front of a revival of aggression and oppression against minorities in Poland? It would be an anti-democratic shame."

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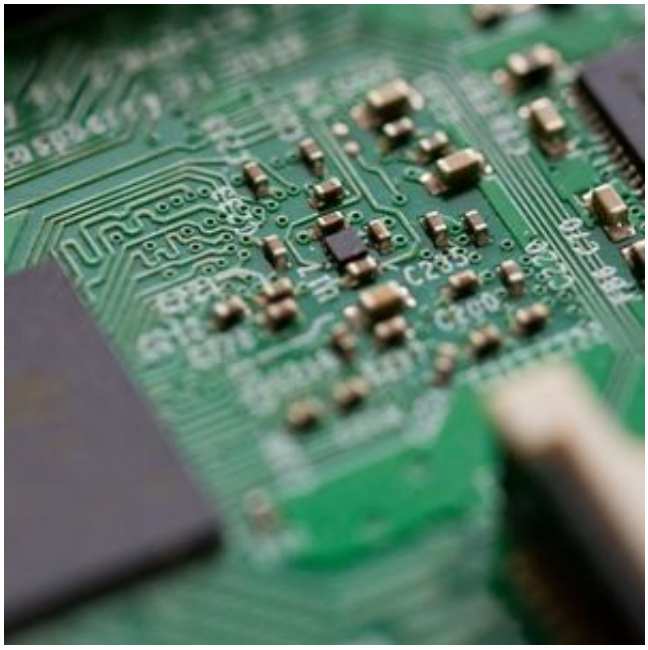


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Josep Maria Terricabras

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

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