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#SOTEU – Catalonia – 'Europe needs to be part of the solution'

Press release from EFA MEP Jordi Solé (Catalonia)

EFA MEP **Jordi Solé** (Catalonia) has invited European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker to visit the nine political prisoners currently being held in Catalan jails, including two former MEPs.

Solé was speaking in the keynote debate on the State of the Union in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, with the presence of the Commission President.

The MEP highlighted that nine peaceful, democratic politicians and civil society leaders have been in prison for nearly a year just for having organised an independence referendum based on a democratic mandate.

He asserted that Europe needs to be part of the solution to the situation in Catalonia.

Speaking in the debate, **Jordi Solé MEP** said:

"Mr Juncker has enlightened us about the need to defend European values against chauvinist nationalism and I couldn't agree more.

"But I'd like to make a suggestion, please go to Catalonia and visit our nine political prisoners, amongst them two former MEPs.

"Please go and have a chat with them about the core values and founding principles of the European Union. And after having discussed with them, ask yourself, what are these people, these democratic, peaceful and pro-European people doing in jail.

"Ask yourself if having politicians and civil society leaders in jail for nearly a year without trial on the basis of fake accusations, just for having organised a referendum, just for having implemented a democratic mandate, if all this is according to European values.

"Yesterday there were over a million people in Barcelona, once again demanding our democratic rights, standing up for European values, against repression. And people convinced, despite feeling let down by European institutions, that Europe needs to be part of the solution."

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Jordi Solé i Ferrando

Member

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