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Trial of Catalan political prisoners

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

EFA MEPs from Catalonia have spoken out in the European Parliament this week as the trial gets underway in Madrid of the Catalan political prisoners - government ministers, civil society leaders and former Speaker of the Catalan parliament - for seeking to assert Catalonia's right to self-determination by peaceful and democratic means.

Speaking in the European Parliament, EFA Group President **Josep-Maria Terricabras** said:

"There now begins in Madrid a court case against members of the former Government of Catalonia and against the most cherished and respected social leaders of our country. This is clearly a political trial. Neither German, Belgian nor Scottish courts recognised the crimes with which those detained have been charged, and for which they have been held in custody for over a year.

"A rancid and anti-democratic post-Franco judiciary is at work, with the support of the former PP government and the consent of the current socialist government.

"This 12th of February, I remember another 12th of February, forty six years ago, when Carlos Arias Navarro, successor of Carrero Blanco, proclaimed what he called 'the spirit of the 12th of February'. And indeed we seem to be carrying on in the spirit of the Francoist Spain of forty six years ago, as if Franco was still alive. Eternal Spain continues to impose itself on modern Spain.

"And in this Chamber, our President and the majority have nothing to say about it. How absolutely shameful."

EFA MEP **Jordi Solé** said:

"In Madrid we have witnessed the start of the most shameful political trial that the European Union has ever seen. Twelve people are on trial in Europe for having organised a self-determination referendum in accordance with a democratic mandate. This court case is a triumph for state nationalism and vengeance politics, but it represents a failure of European values and of the primacy of politics in the face of repression. Official Europe has failed us.

"But you are well aware that treating honest politicians like criminals, that abusing and twisting the rule of law to sustain false accusations, that a far-right party nostalgic about Francoism exercises the popular accusation. You know that all of this clashes head-on with European values.

"And yet it will be our stubborn defence of these values and of European justice itself that will end up repairing the injustices committed and eventually see a return to the path of democracy, justice and freedom."

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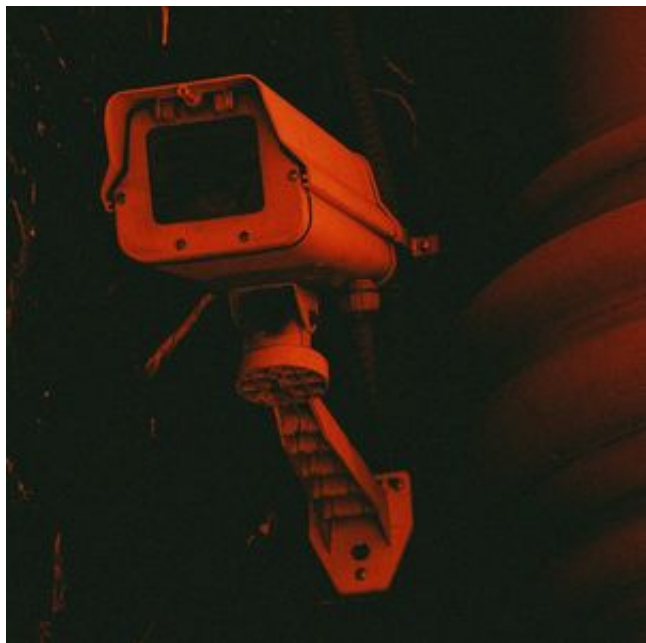


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Jordi Solé i Ferrando

Member



Josep Maria Terricabras

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