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EFA MEPs speak out on press freedom

Press release from EFA MEPs J-M Terricabras & Ana Miranda

EFA MEPs **Josep-Maria Terricabras** (Catalunya) and **Ana Miranda** (Galicia) spoke out in favour of journalists' freedom of expression during this week's European Parliament debate following the tragic murder of Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and his partner.

The European Parliament will vote on a resolution on the matter next month.

Both condemned the killings and Terricabras called for more action to tackle corruption, whilst Ana Miranda also spoke of attacks on freedom of expression in Spain.

Speaking in the debate, EFA Group President **Josep-Maria Terricabras** MEP, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, said:

"The recent murder of the Slovak journalist and his partner is terrible but unfortunately not something new. Across the world, we find too many cases to deplore and condemn, among others the murder of Anna Politkovskaya in Russia and hundreds of journalists and social defenders murdered in Mexico. They were killed because they were investigating and denouncing corruption and abuse of power.

"What can we do? Of course, we should attack the causes of this tragedy. This means that we cannot leave alone those who fight for justice and freedom. Corruption deteriorates the internal of our systems and organizations. Corruption is not just a private matter. That's why we have to push governments and political and social bodies to fight themselves against their internal, structural corruption.

"The European insistence and control in this direction is the best contribution we can make to the memory of those who died because others didn't react timely. If we don't fight corruption systematically, we are leaving critical citizens alone and unprotected."

Ana Miranda MEP, Bloque Nacionalista Galego said:

"We want to mourn the death of the two journalists and to honour them. Those deaths are in addition to 54 cases from last year, and 7 so far this year, in addition to 336 journalists imprisoned and 54 kidnapped.

"In addition to being a high risk profession in many places, journalism is also, on a daily basis, responsible for investigating cases of corruption, tax evasion or capital flight. In fact, in some Member States there are serious attacks on freedom of expression, spying on communications, and right now in Spain, we see journalists' freedom of expression being repressed and gagged, as well as that of artists and those who tweet.

"I want to give my support to all the people affected by reprisals in Spain because they chose to exercise their right to freedom of expression. One only has to note the recent judgement by the European Court of Human Rights.

"Just ask the journalist Ana Pardo de Vera, the vice president of the News Council of TVE, Xabier Fortes, the rapper Valtonyc, the music group La Insurgencia, the singers César Strawberry, Pablo Hásel, the tweeter Casandra, the artist whose work was removed by Arco, or journalists José Luis Calleja or Fernando Garea, who have been banned from TVE debates, or Nacho Carretero author of Fariña. And there are many more names. Just ask all those people repressed by the Gag Law."

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