

Brussels, 27th September 2017

Dear Vice-President Timmermans,

We would like to draw your attention to the current political situation after a referendum of independence has been proposed by the Catalan Government on the 1st of October.

We remain concerned by the measures adopted by the Spanish Government to avoid this referendum to take place, measures that are clearly aggravating the conflict.

On Wednesday 14 senior officials of the Government of Catalonia were arrested. Police besieged the headquarters of one of the political parties that supports the referendum process in the Catalan Parliament. The Spanish Government intends to take control of the accounts of the Catalan Government. More than 700 mayors in Catalonia have been threatened with arrest for their support to the organization of the referendum proposed by the Catalan government. Political advertising material has been confiscated. Public debates have been forbidden.

These measures are putting at risk core values of the EU such as freedom of speech and assembly.

We strongly believe that trying to avoid that referendum by means of Criminal Law and by undermining fundamental freedoms is no solution for a conflict that has clear political grounds.

There is today an urgent need to restore talks between the Catalan and the Spanish authorities in order to find a political solution to the current situation. It will only be by dialogue and negotiation that a political solution can be found.

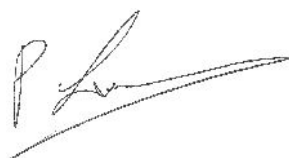
It is for this reason that we kindly request you, as First Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, to take the initiative from the European Commission and initiate a dialogue that brings the situation back into political negotiation before the 1st of October, calling on both sides to respect fundamental freedoms as recognised in the EU Treaties and initiate immediate talks.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if any further clarification is required.

Kind regards,



Ska Keller
Greens / EFA Co-President



Philippe Lamberts
Greens / EFA Co-President

Mr. Frans TIMMERMANS
First Vice-President of the European Commission, Better Regulation,
Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

CC: Mr. Jean-Claude JUNCKER
President of the European Commission