

ORAL QUESTION H-0920/08  
for Question Time at the part-session in December 2008  
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure  
by Josu Ortuondo Larrea  
to the Council

Subject: Initiatives for respecting and protecting peoples and national identities

The French presidency of the EU will finish at the end of 2008, and the occasion may be marked by raising an issue which is essential for the future of the Europe we are building - namely respect for peoples within that Europe.

To quote President Sarkozy in his speech of 25 September 2007 to the UN General Assembly:  
'There will not be peace in the world if the international community compromises with the right of peoples to self-determination or with human rights (...) There will not be peace in the world without respect for diversity, without respect for national identities (...) Commitment to one's faith, to one's identity, to one's language and culture, and the way one lives, thinks and believes is legitimate and profoundly human. To deny it is to fuel humiliation.'

To be included here is a people with a language and identity believed to be among the oldest in Europe - the people of Euskal Herria, or the Basque Country, whose existence is today denied outright by the French state.

As the French presidency draws to an end, can the Council state what measures and initiatives are in place for respecting and protecting peoples and national identities existing within Europe but lacking their own state?

Tabled: 05.11.2008  
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