

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0503/09  
by Josu Ortuondo Larrea (ALDE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Publishing official maps of the EU containing legal names of territories

In response to Question P-6678/08 by José Javier Pomés Ruiz the Commission stated that 'the feature referred to in the question is the result of a technical error which would be corrected'.

Mr Pomés Ruiz argued that 'Article 1 of the Statute of Autonomy for the Basque Country adopts the official term "Euskadi" or "País Vasco" to describe the Spanish autonomous community in question' and that 'the term "Euskal Herria" is, therefore, invalid as a name for the autonomous community because it contradicts existing Spanish legislation; it is, however, associated with the political scheme seeking to incorporate the "Comunidad Foral de Navarra", other territories in the south of France and the Basque Country into one joint political body, something which is, furthermore, one of the goals publically sought by ETA terrorists'.

Irrespective of whether Mr Pomés Ruiz equates the term 'Euskal Herria' with ETA, something which is absolutely incorrect, at the very least, I would like to ask the Commission the following:

Is the Commission aware that in the autonomous community of the Basque Country both Spanish and 'Euskera', the Basque language, are equally recognised as official languages and that in each of these languages Article 1 of the Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country states the following:

'Article 1.

The Basque people or "Euskal Herria", as an expression of its nationality, and in order to attain self-government, constitutes itself as an autonomous community within the Spanish state under the name of "Euskadi", the Basque country, in accordance with the Constitution and with this Statute which lays down its fundamental institutional rules.'

Is the Commission aware that, in accordance with the aforementioned quotation, firstly, the Basque country and 'Euskal Herria' are the same and are official translations and, secondly, that the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, which may also incorporate Navarra or Nafarroa if that were to be decided upon, may be officially referred to as 'Euskadi', 'Euskal Herria' or 'País Vasco'. The term 'Euskal Herria', therefore, is perfectly valid and does not in any way infringe existing Spanish legislation.

In the light of previous comments and following any verification which it deems appropriate, does the Commission believe it ought to rectify the response given to Mr Pomés Ruiz, seeing as no technical error exists, and that, therefore, there is nothing to correct?