

EFA General Assembly, 1st-2nd October 2020

Recapitulative Political Statement

#BuildingBridges

The European Free Alliance [EFA] promotes the right to self-determination and supports people's aspirations to choose their own political future, including independence, greater autonomy or linguistic justice and cultural recognition for minorities.

EFA, as a group of 47 political parties across Europe, believes that all peoples have the right to choose their own destiny and the best institutional framework in which to achieve their empowerment.

The EFA General Assembly was held online, but was originally planned to be held in Flensburg to mark the centenary of the historic 1920 Danish-German border referendum. Our member parties the Südschleswigscher Wählerverband [SSW] and the Schleswigsche Partei [SP] represent the Danish and German minority communities on both sides of that border.

The 1920 referendum continues to be seen as an example of peaceful cooperation, of compromise, and of commitment to democracy. It is only in the spirit of the Schleswig plebiscite that we will face the challenges of the future, by working together, and by building bridges.

Discussions and decisions of the EFA GA 2020:

1. The General Assembly opened with a declaration of solidarity with the people of Artsakh, calling for peace, an end to hostilities by Azeri forces, and a return to negotiations. EFA member party, the Democratic Party of Artsakh gave the Assembly an update on the current situation, and the EFA declaration of solidarity was adopted.
2. The first day of the General Assembly marked the three year anniversary of the Catalan independence referendum, and a video message of friendship and solidarity from Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya's Marta Rovira, who since the referendum has been forced into a political exile in Switzerland, was shown to the Assembly.
3. Two new members were welcomed to EFA - Patto per l'Autonomia and Comitato Libertà Toscana. The Partito Sardo d'Azione was expelled from the party. The Autonomie e Ambiente, an

alliance formed by 10 parties and movements in Italy which network for autonomy, independence and a federal Europe on democratic and non-violent grounds, also gave the GA a presentation on their activities.

4. A new set of EFA statutes were adopted. We are the only European Union Political Party to have incorporated the status of Observer MEP into its statutes, a new status for ex-MEPs from Scotland and Wales who have lost their seats due to Brexit. The new statutes also introduced a political charter to the Articles of Association, and the hosting of an EFA Congress in the year preceding European Elections in order to collaboratively prepare its manifesto.
5. The EFA Working Plan 2020, Annual Report 2019, and the Strategy 2020-2022 was presented to the General Assembly, outlining the strategic goal of EFA and its activities and priorities for the next two years.
6. A debate moderated by Ana Stanič on the Future of Europe was held, with Leader of Plaid Cymru Adam Price, Valentina Servera the President of EFAy, Jill Evans Vice-President of EFA and Observer MEP, Christian Allard Observer MEP, Jordi Solé MEP Secretary General of the EFA Party and President of the EFA EP Group. The future of the European Union was debated in light of the coronavirus crisis, and EFA presented a report on the post-pandemic future of the EU and the impact of the pandemic on communities seeking self-determination and linguistic justice. EFA will contribute to the Conference on the Future of Europe with practical proposals, following from EFA's historic contribution to the Convention on the Future of Europe in 2003, with Neil MacCormick introducing the concept of 'internal enlargement' within the European Union.
7. The General Assembly was given a presentation on the European Citizens' Initiative on Cohesion Policy for the Equality of Regions and Sustainability of Regional Cultures by its co-ordinator Dr Attila Dabis, an initiative supported and promoted by EFA.
8. Updates regarding the activities of Coppieters Foundation and EFA Youth were given to delegates, outlining past and future events, the impact of the pandemic on their activities, and outlining future strategies and avenues of co-operation.
9. Motions that were approved by the GA on: Minority schools under attack in Latvia; Minority languages are professional skills; Catalonia: end of repression, dialogue, amnesty and self-determination; The Conference on the Future of Europe; Funding the Just Transition Mechanism; 100 years since the plebiscite in the Danish-German border region: Minorities building bridges; the EU must implement the citizens' initiative MSPI to protect minorities in Europe; Situation in Turkey: attack on local democracy and equal representation; Biodiversity in the European Rural Development Plan 2021-2030; For a just policy toward Bulgaria's and Greece's indigenous Macedonians; Situation in Palestine. An urgency motion on Macro-territorial strategy in the Mediterranean was also adopted.
10. Declarations were adopted on: Support to extensive breeding in Corsica; The Turkish Minority of Western Thrace recommends Greece to implement the provisions of international and bilateral conventions; The EU should abolish geo-blocking for public broadcasting services; The EFA supports the application of the Danish-German border region as a UNESCO intangible cultural

heritage; Ignoring Moravian heritage and rejecting rights of this Central European land in the Czech Republic in the long term; Rise of neo-fascist violence in Europe.

11. Hişyar Özsoy, Member of Parliament and co-chair of the Foreign Affairs department of the HDP (People's Democratic Party from Kurdistan) gave the Assembly an update regarding the suppression of the HDP party and the Kurdish community. MEP François Alfonsi, co-chair of the Kurdish Friendship Group in the European Parliament also intervened, outlined developments with the parliament and on EU level.
12. EFA intends to hold its next General Assembly in Brussels in 2021 if possible. Should the pandemic continue to be an issue, the next General Assembly will also be held online.