

EUROLANG: 20.02.2004

Demonstration in Euskal Herria one year after the closure of Egunkaria

One year after the closure of the Basque newspaper Egunkaria, a demonstration and an event was organised in Donostia (San Sebastian) on Friday to remember the closure of the Basque language newspaper.

The need for consensus and the desire to work together were emphasised in the messages of the speakers, according to Berria, the new Basque newspaper.

Joan Mari Torrealdai, Chairman of Egunkaria's Board of Directors, and Xabier Mendiguren, Secretary General of Kontseilua, spoke about the need to protect Basque cultural activities and the need to foster consensus and cooperation, so that the injustice that occurred one year ago does not happen again.

Torrealdai and Mendiguren remembered the prisoners Iñaki Uria and Xabier Alegria. "We need them both here working", said Mendiguren, "and we have to remember this every day until this wish becomes a reality".

Egunkaria's former director, Martxelo Otamendi, protested the innocence of the prisoners in a silent demonstration which lasted for half an hour along with workers of the closed newspaper and Alegria's and Uria's relatives.

Günther Rautz, the General Secretary of MIDAS, the Minority Dailies Association, was also among the speakers. In his speech, in English and Basque, he expressed his solidarity and support for Egunkaria and described how the MIDAS Association had condemned the closure in the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

Among the audience there were representatives from the Basque political institutions, political parties, social organisations, the media, and writers. (Eurolang)