

MIDAS conference calls for release of Egunkaria journalists

Davyth Hicks in Brussel / Bruxelles 6/7/2004

The Basque newspaper Berria hosted the MIDAS (European Association of Dailies Published in Minority and Regional Languages) conference which ended over the weekend and was held in Donostia. Speakers called for the release of the remaining Egunkaria journalists, Xabier Alegria and Iñaki Uria, still being held in jail after 15 months.

Joxe Joan Gonzalez-Txabarri, the Head of the Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa, called for the release of Iñaki Uria. He said that: "In western Europe it would be difficult to understand how a person in a political position could call for the release of a journalist. Yet, it is not that strange in the political atmosphere of the Basque Country."

Toni Ebner, MIDAS Chairman and editor of the South Tyrol newspaper Dolomiten, condemned the closing down of Egunkaria and expressed "full solidarity" with Iñaki Uria. "MIDAS has not come to the Basque Country by chance, but to express its solidarity."

EuroLang correspondent Áron Balló, editor of the Hungarian language paper Szabadság, looked at how enlargement had benefited Romania's Hungarian speaking community and how, now the language has EU official status, many documents and publications will for the first time be available in Hungarian. (EuroLang)