



His Excellency Mr. David María Sassoli  
President of the European Parliament  
Building PAUL-HENRI SPAAK 09B011  
60 Wiertz Street  
B-1047 Brussels

Brussels, 16 March 2020

Dear Mr. President,

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic is spreading at a dramatic pace across the European Union, with all Member states now reporting cases within their territory. Such a severe spread of the disease makes clear that COVID-19 is a European challenge requiring European solutions. It will also require unity and solidarity of all Europeans, of all Europeans regardless of where we live.

Unfortunately, Italy and Spain are suffering this pandemic the hardest, having higher death toll relative to the beginning of the outbreak compared to other countries such as China or South Korea. As a matter of fact, Italy has already experienced almost 2,000 deaths and in Spain this tragedy has taken a toll of almost 300 deaths, mainly in the Region of Madrid.

That is also why you will understand our astonishment and outrage at how this weekend, after the Spanish Government adopted extraordinary measures to combat the disease, one of the Members of the European Parliament decided to make an abominable mockery of the deaths that are occurring in Spain due to COVID-19. More specifically, Ms. Clara Ponsatí MEP publicly ridiculed the deaths of Madrid citizens on her Twitter account. Following a tweet where she described the risks that the Madrid was facing, she put out a well-known saying in Spanish "*from Madrid to Heaven*"<sup>1</sup> right after (see Annex 1).

Although the indignation caused by her comment and the social pressure it provoked forced her to delete the tweet, the damage was already done. Unfortunately, Mr. Carles Puigdemont MEP thought this vexation was worthy of his endorsement and proceeded to retweet it, following thousands of other "RTs". It is no surprise, since Mr. Puigdemont himself has accused the Spanish government of wanting "*a virus for everyone*" and of preferring a Spain that was "*infected rather than broken*" (see Annex 2).

Mr. President, freedom of expression is the cornerstone of our democracies but it cannot cover speeches that incite hatred and confrontation between people or territories. It cannot shield the mockery of the deaths of other human beings either nor the encouragement of xenophobia and supremacism. Lastly, it can, by no means, allow for the trivialisation of the misfortune and suffering, the fear and anguish, that afflict us all at this dark time.

As representatives of the Spanish citizens we ask you to take measures in your capacity as President of the European Parliament and sanction this aberrant behaviour. Considering how difficult the situation is in Spain, we cannot tell Europeans we are united in our grief and efforts against the disease if some MEPs use these deaths to move forward their own political agenda.

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<sup>1</sup> "*De Madrid al cielo*", which can be translated into "*From Madrid to heaven*" or "*From Madrid to afterlife*" is a popular saying that people from Madrid use to show pride for their city. **The pejorative use of this expression**, right after a tweet that linked to an article containing the figures of deaths and the risks that the region is facing, **aims to show joy or desire for the suffering and death of the people from Madrid.**



Therefore, we respectfully ask you to consider possible sanctions to the remarks made by Ms. Clara Ponsatí MEP and Mr. Carles Puigdemont MEP, assessing whether this behaviour is in line with the Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament and our ethical standards as direct representatives of all Europeans. In particular, Article 10(1) of the Rules of Procedure obliges Members to behave in accordance with the principle of mutual respect and the values and principles laid down in the Treaties, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Ensuring that Members of this House respect the dignity of individuals is particularly important at such difficult times, which require the representatives of all Europeans to live up to the expectations of our citizens and act in an exemplary manner.

Yours sincerely,

Luis Garicano Gabilondo,

Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz

Soraya Rodríguez Ramos

José Ramón Bauzá Díaz

Jordi Cañas Pérez

Susana Solís Pérez

Adrián Vázquez Lázara



**Clara Ponsatí** @ClaraPonsati · 59m

Madrid corre ya más riesgo que Lombardía o Hubei pero sigue sin decretar el cierre total



**El Confidencial**

Madrid corre ya más riesgo que Lombardía o Hubei pero sigue sin de...  
[elconfidencial.com](https://www.elconfidencial.com)

33

589

708



**Clara Ponsatí**  
@ClaraPonsati

**De Madrid al Cielo.**

14:17 · 15 Mar 20 · [Twitter for iPad](#)

**96** Retweets **392** Likes

**Note:** Tweet 1: piece of news about the COVID- 19 death toll in Madrid; Tweet 2: “from Madrid to Heaven” (afterlife).



Carles Puigdemont ✓

@KRLS

Són els del "virus para todos", la seva concepció del federalisme. "¡Antes infectada que rota!". El president @QuimTorra i la presidenta Francina Armengol prioritzen la salut, i fan bé de ser exigents i de dir el que s'ha de fer. D'altres, no se sap... o sí.

[Traducir Tweet](#)



Albert Velasco @velasc\_alberto · 2d

En lloc de reconèixer que el confinament de Catalunya és una decisió que calia adoptar a tot l'estat, a totes les CCAA, la coscupeople, com els Abascal groupies, criticant el president Torra. Els surt l'imperialisme i l'espanyolitat a l...

10:32 · 14/3/20 · [Twitter for Android](#)

**Note:** "The ones of "virus for everyone", their understanding of federalism. 'Better infected than broken!', President Torra and President Armengol prioritize health, and they do well in being demanding and say what needs to be done. We do not know about others... or we do".