

**5 May 2010**

**Ireland's rule on dual mandate for MEP's exposed as a complete farce**

The People's Movement has strongly criticized the rejection of a motion to hold the Donegal by-election and has called for a constitutional amendment to guarantee by-elections take place within a minimum time frame once a Dáil seat becomes vacant.

Chairperson of the Movement, former MEP Patricia McKenna, said: 'Irish abolition of the dual mandate for MEP's has been exposed as a complete farce following today's decision by the government parties to deny the people of Donegal South-West a by-election to fill the seat left vacant as a result of Pat the Cope Gallagher's election to the European Parliament 11 months ago'.

She said: 'Fianna Fáil and the Greens' refusal to allow the people of Donegal South-West proper representation in Dáil Éireann is an affront to the principles of democracy and an assault on our constitutional rights. This situation clearly demonstrates the need for a constitutional amendment to provide for speedy by-elections whenever a Dáil seat becomes vacant. I firmly believe that the authors of our constitution never envisaged a situation whereby citizen of this state would be denied fair representation in the Dáil. Three Dáil seats are currently vacant and the government parties are deliberately abusing their position because they fear the will of the people.'

'The ban on the dual mandate for MEPs was introduced to ensure that the people were properly represented in both parliaments. Pat the Cope Gallagher should resign his seat, as he has clearly been elected under false pretences' she concluded.

Ends

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