

Iñaki Uria from the Basque newspaper Egunkaria released on bail

Davyth Hicks in Brussel/ Bruxelles 8/4/2004

Iñaki Uria, journalist and manager with the banned Basque language newspaper Egunkaria was finally released on bail on Monday night, reports the Basque newspaper Berría, after being held in jail for nearly two years.

Speaking to Berría, Inaki Uria said: "I'm not free," shortly after being released. After embracing his relatives, friends and colleagues who had gone to the gates of the prison to welcome him, he left Aranjuez after having been locked up for seventeen and a half months and after posting 450,000 euros in bail with the Spanish National Criminal Court.

Twelve kilos leaner he emerged from prison sporting a black Berría T-shirt. He hugged his parents first and then the rest of his relatives, friends and colleagues who had travelled down to Aranjuez on the coach.

"I'm delighted to be out but I don't feel that I'm free," said Uria, once he was on the coach bound for Andoain (Gipuzkoa). "And not just because I'm on conditional release, but because I feel that all Basque citizens are on conditional release," he added. "Under a special system of laws we are under the control of a special court like the Spanish National Criminal Court, and we haven't yet done enough to overcome that."

Uria also commented on the prison: "They are much more authoritarian towards Basque prisoners. Basque prisoners are subjected to apartheid in prison." (Eurolang)