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## **Jordi Solé: #SOTEU - 'Europe must stand by its citizens'**

### **Press release from the EFA Group in the European Parliament**

*EU has a duty to act when democracy and self-determination is threatened within its borders*

Speaking in today's State of the Union debate in the European Parliament with European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen, President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament **Jordi Solé** urged the Commission President that 'Europe must stand by its citizens' as we respond to and emerge from the Coronavirus pandemic.

But as well as responding to the economic challenges left by the Covid-19 pandemic, Jordi Solé also reminded the Commission President that the EU has a duty to act when democracy and self-determination is under threat within its borders, as is the case of Catalonia.

The Catalan MEP is President of the European Free Alliance Group in the European Parliament and Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group. He recently replaced political prisoner Oriol Junqueras in the European Parliament after he was prevented from taking up his seat by Spanish authorities.

Speaking in the debate, **Jordi Solé MEP** said:

*"Madame President*

*"We have been through difficult times this year and still difficult times lay ahead of us. So many challenges overlapping. You mentioned them.*

*"That's why it is so important that this time the EU, contrary to the 2008 crisis, stands by its citizens. That the EU shows it is useful to fight against a pandemic; for helping the economies recover and taking care of those people and business most affected by it; and for transforming these economies into greener and fairer ones.*

*"But the EU also has to deliver when conflicts on democracy and self-determination arise within the Union.*

*"Madame President. It is not me who should be addressing you right now. It should be Oriol Junqueras, elected MEP and one of the Catalan political prisoners, shamefully behind bars for almost 3 years.*

*"Yes, here Europe must deliver too, because this injustice is a stain not only for Spain but for the whole of Europe. So help them and the exiles be back home. And demand that the Spanish government once and for all be brave and negotiate a solution for Catalonia based on respect and real democracy."*

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Jordi Solé

Member

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