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Refugees in the Mediterranean – MEPs call for solidarity

Press release from EFA MEPs Jordi Solé & J-M Terricabras (Catalonia)

MEPs today held an emergency debate on humanitarian emergencies in the Mediterranean and the need for solidarity.

This follows the Italian and Maltese governments' refusal to allow the refugee rescue ship MV Aquarius access to their ports in order to land the 629 people on board.

Speaking in the debate, Catalan MEP **Jordi Solé** (Esquerra Republicana) said:

"This is not a debate about Italy or about any particular state, this is a debate about the European response to the humanitarian drama we all are facing in the Mediterranean Sea. However, the main problem is precisely the lack of a European response.

"The problem is that all states still do not recognize that in order to effectively manage the current refugees' crisis they must share responsibilities and act with solidarity.

"We must advance in the reform of the Dublin System instead of trying to deal with it from a selfish or individualistic attitude.

"Let's not lie ourselves, Aquarius is only a symptom of a reality that's both hard and unacceptable.

"The Mediterranean Sea is the most unequal and deadly border in the world. We can train the coastguards and maybe make the sea less deadly, but the inequality would remain nonetheless. This is the reason why we will face more Aquariuses."

Fellow MEP **Josep-Maria Terricabras**, First Vice-President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, commented earlier:

"I hope that in the Council meeting at the end of the month the Member States will take a more firm position on migration than they have done so far. Have they, for instance, the political will to effectively reform Dublin? We don't need nice words with no real political content.

"What happened a few days ago, against international law, with the boat in Italy and Malta is just a last scandal in which the EU must intervene, if it still has the capacity to speak for itself and wishes to be taken account of.

"The reaction of Valencia and Barcelona in offering themselves to receive those migrants in danger is a good example of humanity and decent politics. Something is now clear and urgent: to talk about the future of Europe means to talk about the Europe of the future."

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Josep Maria Terricabras

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group

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