Tunisia on the edge of democracy © Duncan Wal

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Tunisia deserves a bolder European response

Press release from EFA MEP Jordi Solé

MEPs have raised concerns about the political crisis in Tunisia.

President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament, **Jordi Solé MEP**, called for the EU to take bolder steps to help a neighbour and partner country restore the constitutional and democratic order.

Tunisia's President Saied sacked the country's Prime Minister and suspended parliament last July, and in September, he suspended the constitution.

MEPs debated the political crisis in the presence of the European Union's High Representative for Foreign and Security policy.

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

"President Saied's decisions since July have shaken the democratic foundations of Tunisia, the country where the Arab Spring was born. It is unclear yet whether these highly controversial decisions will end up being a parenthesis in Tunisia's democratic journey or represent a turn for the worse.

"Fighting corruption or pushing for reforms to improve the socio-economic situation, are commendable goals. What is not commendable is that this becomes the excuse to close a parliament, concentrate powers around the president and govern by decree. The apparent popular support for the president is also not a reason to justify all this.

"We welcome the designation of a new Prime Minister, the first woman to lead a government in the Arab world as a positive step, but we must remember that the powers of her executive remain very limited.

"President Saied has yet to present a clear roadmap towards the full restoration of the constitutional and democratic order, including the parliament. We would have liked to see more pressure from the EU in this sense. The democratic aspirations of the Tunisian people, and the defence of fundamental freedoms, deserved a bolder European response."

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Jordi Solé

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