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EFA calls for more EU leadership against common challenges

EFA President Jordi Solé responds to the State of the Union address

EFA President in the European Parliament **Jordi Solé** has called on the EU to step up its solidarity and face today's major challenges with the same 'leadership and determination' shown during the pandemic.

MEPs were responding to the annual State of the Union address by European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen.

Whilst there was praise for the European response to the pandemic, the EFA MEP was critical of the lack of urgency shown in facing other urgent challenges, such as the difficulties facing European industry.

The President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament also took the opportunity to remind the European Commission President of the ongoing negotiations between Catalonia and Spain, calling for the EU to support a negotiated solution.

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

"The pandemic has shown that when European institutions take the lead in facing common challenges, the EU can deliver results... despite some initial flaws, what has been achieved so far is truly remarkable. With the terrible contradiction though, that we now have millions of doses waiting in the freezer while in many other countries vaccination has hardly begun. We need to step up our solidarity.

"If we were to face all the big challenges with the same leadership and determination, then as a Union we would achieve much more.

"And we don't lack challenges. For instance, many of our European companies are in a race against time to maintain their competitiveness despite growing demand. They face rising energy and raw material prices, shortage of components, unfair competition from third countries.

"We cannot achieve the goals of the green deal without them. Let's support our industry with an ambitious strategy. Let's translate the strategic autonomy into something more than just fancy words.

"On another note, today, the Catalan and Spanish governments are formally resuming negotiations on how to

solve the ongoing political conflict between Catalonia and Spain... The EU should follow this negotiation and embrace it as much as it can, because in a democratic space as we want the EU to be, conflicts on self-determination require a democratic and negotiated solution.”

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Jordi Solé

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