

## Article – Sassoli calls for action on recovery: ‘Our citizens expect bold action’



Sassoli addressed heads of state and government at the start of a video conference of the European Council on 19 June to discuss the recovery plan and the EU's next long-term budget.

"Time is a luxury we cannot afford," he said. "We need to act urgently and courageously, as EU citizens, businesses and economies need an immediate response. Our citizens expect bold action. Now it is time for us to deliver."

Sassoli called the Commission proposal "ambitious" but added: "In our view it only scratches the surface of what needs to be done."

The President also spoke out against issuing loans as part of the recovery plans. "Parliament is keen to stress that any common debt issued must be repaid fairly, without burdening future generations," he said.

"Let us not forget that providing support solely in the form of loans would have an asymmetric impact on the indebtedness of the individual member states and would be more costly for the Union as a whole. We have an opportunity now to refashion Europe and make it more equal, greener and more forward-looking. To this end, we should seize our chance to introduce a basket of new own

resources.”

Sassoli called the introduction of new own resources for the EU “an essential prerequisite” for any overall agreement on the EU’s long-term budget.

Stressing the importance of an ambitious recovery plan and budget, he said: “Now is not the time to water down our ambitions. We need to show our citizens the value of Europe and our ability to come up with solutions that matter in their lives.”

The President also addressed the ongoing EU-UK talks on future relations. The previous day Parliament had adopted a report setting out its views. “We will push for an ambitious, overarching and comprehensive agreement in line with the joint commitments undertaken in the political declaration. We believe that this is the best possible outcome for both sides and, despite the limited time available, with goodwill and determination, it is still possible.”