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## **COVID-19 Coronavirus: EU Parliament's plenary underway. Sassoli, "we cannot suspend democracy"**

"Dear colleagues, good morning. This is a difficult and sensitive time for Europe and our citizens. I hope that you, your families and your loved ones are all in good health". The President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, said this as he opened the extraordinary plenary session of the European Parliament, which is live-streamed from Brussels with remote voting. Parliament is due to discuss and approve a series of measures today to curb the spread of COVID-19. Sassoli said: "We are living through an extraordinary and unexpected situation which, during recent weeks, has meant we had to take unprecedented decisions, anticipating the rapid development in circumstances, with the goal of protecting the health of our staff and our members, but also, at the same time, ensuring that democratic life in our institution can continue. We have had to slow things down - that is true. But we have not stopped, because democracy cannot be suspended, particularly when we have such a dramatic crisis going on". And he went on to say: "These are difficult times, and it is important that we remain at the service of our citizens who are suffering so much. We have to give them hope and provide them with guidance, when it comes to dealing with these dark times and those difficult times to come. As legislators, we have the means, the chance and the duty to help".

Valentina Bombelli