
EU Parliament: Von der Leyen, defence, air shield, Green Deal amongst priorities. “Bloodshed in Gaza must stop”

(Strasbourg) In her address to the European Parliament to secure backing for a second term as President of the European Commission, Ursula Von der Leyen listed a number of policy priorities: economic prosperity, support for agriculture, Green Deal, protection of democracy, security and defence, foreign policy (Ukraine, Middle East), enlargement, Pillar of Social Rights, opportunities for young people. She promised to appoint a Commissioner with responsibility for “generational equity”, one for housing, one for the Mediterranean region. Our Europe is meeting the “targets of the European Green Deal with pragmatism, technology-neutrality and innovation”. On the energy front, the European Union must “ensure that the era of dependency on Russian fossil fuels is over. Once and for all”. As regards defence, we should invest more and together. We need an air shield “not only to protect our airspace but as a strong symbol of European unity in defence matters”. After reaffirming full and unwavering support to Ukraine, including in the military field, she said about the Middle East: “The bloodshed in Gaza must stop now. Too many children, women and civilians have lost their lives as a result of Israel’s response to Hamas’ brutal terror. The people of Gaza cannot bear any more”. She then called for an immediate ceasefire and the release of the hostages to “prepare the day after” the conflict.

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