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## **Coronavirus Covid-19: Von der Leyen (EU Commission), the epidemic “is not fought by raising barriers”. A call to solidarity among the States. “Medical staff, our heroes”**

“The virus is not fought by raising barriers”. Ursula von der Leyen’s passionate speech at the plenary meeting of the European Parliament, today. The Assembly is streaming its meeting, few MEPs are in the room. A number of measures to fight the epidemic in Europe are being voted on. Most of the MEPs are on conference call: 686 out of 705 of them voted on the first round, the results of which are about to be announced. The president of the EU Commission summarised the healthcare and economic initiatives that have been taken by the EU in these last few days. She pointed out that “the interstate borders must stay open” to let medical equipment and goods to stock up shops and supermarkets flow through. She mentions Italy and Spain, the countries that have been hit hardest by Covid-19; she makes a few examples of cooperation among states. And she states: “in a few weeks’ time, the world has changed, day-to-day life has changed. We are isolated at home, the streets are empty. We are fighting for our lives, we are discovering our weaknesses”. Hence her insistence on making supportive efforts to fight the disease. Then, she thinks of the victims, their families; she praises the medical staff who are taking care of the people: “They are our heroes”. Lastly, she recalls that, “worried about the present and the future, the citizens are looking to us: what Europe will we build?”.

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