[Article – Sassoli: The decisions we will take will reshape the Union for decades](#)

The Parliament President was speaking at the start of an EU summit on 17 July dedicated to finding agreement among national governments on the EU's next long-term budget, which would also include measures to help Europe recover from the coronavirus pandemic.

"The discussions and decisions we will be called upon to take will be crucial in rebuilding our Union for the decades to come," said Sassoli. He said there was no going back following the Covid-19 crisis.

"The pandemic has given us new responsibilities and duties: the responsibility to make choices and the duty to do so in the interests of the many, not the few. If we take this as our brief, it becomes obvious where we should invest: in the green economy, health, education, and in digital, democratic and social rights."

Sassoli said the recovery plan must help to transform the economy and address widening inequalities: "The recovery plan must be commensurate with our ambitions."

He said Parliament backed the level of funding proposed by the European

Commission and the proposed splits between grants and loans. The President also called for a basket of own resources to be introduced and an end to rebates for some member states, which he called "unfair and hard to justify".

Sassoli reminded EU leaders that Parliament's consent to the budget is crucial. "It is unthinkable that a Europe which has reached agreement on a joint response to the crisis should sideline Parliament."

The President said Parliament was "disappointed" with the Council proposal on the budget being presented at the summit: "If we are to bring about a recovery, we need steady, long-term funding. This is a prerequisite for Parliament's consent."

Sassoli stressed the importance of solidarity in the current crisis: "Europe has grown together based on common values. Let us not reduce the European Union to a continent-wide ATM."

He added: "Parliament will give its consent to the [EU's long-term budget] only if it meets the priorities I have mentioned today."