

Beat: Politics

European Parliament President David Sassoli died at 65

EP will honour his memory next week

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USPA NEWS - European Parliament President David Sassoli passed away on 11 January. The Parliament honored his memory in a ceremony on Monday in Strasbourg. Sassoli passed away earlier in Aviano (Italy), where he had been hospitalised since 26 December. A Member of the European Parliament since 2009, he was elected President in July 2019 for the first half of the legislature.

President Sassoli adopted extraordinary measures enabling the European Parliament to carry out its duties and exercise its prerogatives under the Treaties during the course of the pandemic. He also played a prominent role in championing an ambitious long-term EU budget and effective recovery facility. In addition, the late President led Parliament in showing its solidarity towards the less fortunate when the crisis first hit, with supportive actions in European Parliament's host cities such as providing meals to charities and shelter in Parliament's premises to women who are victims of violence. Determined to draw from the lessons of the pandemic, President Sassoli also launched a large reflection exercise with Members to rethink and reinforce Parliamentary democracy.

As a dedicated European, President Sassoli underlined in his speech at the European Council in December a few weeks ago that "What Europe needs, and needs most of all, is a new project of hope. I think we can build that project on the basis of a powerful three-pronged approach: a Europe that innovates; a Europe that protects; and a Europe that illuminates."

A ceremony to honour his memory will take place on Monday 17 January at the opening of the plenary session in Strasbourg in the presence of former MEP and Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta. In Rome, President David Sassoli will lie in state on Thursday, January 13 from 10.00 to 18.00 in Sala della Protomoteca of the Campidoglio. The funeral service will take place on Friday, January 14 at 12.00 in the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli.

Election of the new EP President

As outlined in the Rules of Procedure (Rule 20), the interim Presidency will be ensured by the first Vice-President of the Parliament in the days leading up to the election of a new President. As originally planned before the sudden passing of President Sassoli, the election of the President for the second half of the mandate will take place on Tuesday, January 18 during the Strasbourg plenary. The elections of the Vice-Presidents and Quaestors will follow in the same week.

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