



**Situation in Egypt: - in the presence of Bernardino LEON, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region EP Committee on Foreign Affairs**

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EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region has met MEPS this Monday to discuss the escalating situation in Egypt after a mixed EU delegation visited the African country. On top of that, President of Egypt Mohamed Morsi, who has just completed his first 100 days in office, has proposed a referendum on the draft Constitution. The referendum is set for December 15th and will require 10,000 judges. This decision has raised concern mainly among government members, opposition forces and the judiciary. The Supreme Judicial Council has agreed to allocate judges and members of the prosecution to oversee the constitutional referendum. Judges will officially oversee the referendum even though many of them are currently on strike. Several political parties, groups and organisations in Egypt have announced their intention to march to the presidential palace this Tuesday in order to protest against Mohamed Morsi's recent political decisions. The opponents say that the draft Constitution undermines basic freedoms.



Only the original language version is authentic and it prevails in the event of its differing from the translated versions.

TIME	DESCRIPTION	DURATION
00:00:00	Title	00:00:05
00:00:05	Exterior of the EP building in Brussels	00:00:05
00:00:10	Cutaways from the meeting in the AFET Committee (4 shots)	00:00:17
00:00:27	SOUNDBITE (English) Bernardino LEON, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region: "A number of political parties has been expressing these views, and announcing demonstrations tomorrow in front of the presidential palace in Cairo. A statement has been signed by 18 political parties and groups".	00:00:22
00:00:49	SOUNDBITE (English) Bernardino LEON, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region: "The opposition is mostly either boycotting the referendum or proposing for the moment a no vote. But, let me tell you that not all opposition forces, not all forces that are supporting the government are having this position. There are also voices proposing solutions, trying to lay bridges. We have just seen some minutes ago a new proposal by the former Human Rights Committee	00:00:58

	<p>new proposal by the former Human Rights Committee chair; proposing solutions to try to lay bridges, to find common ground on the government, the president, the opposition forces and the judiciary".</p>	
00:01:47	<p>SOUNDBITE (English) Bernardino LEON, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region: "Our message has been, the key now is to build a strong consensus among all political forces, to reach an agreement with the judiciary to avoid and institutional class and also to put the drafting and referendum process back on the right path".</p>	00:00:23
00:02:10	<p>SOUNDBITE (English) Bernardino LEON, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region: "The European Union is in a unique position; it is probably the only important actor in the international community that has such a tool as a task force and its final statement and give us out of this responsibility, out of our unique position, it marks the path we have to follow, we can follow in the coming days trying to work with those trying to lay bridges. This is not going to be easy, I think not only the European External Action Service but also members of this Chamber can play a very important role and we encourage them to play an important role in the coming days with the interlocutor in Egypt talking to the government forces, the opposition forces and all institutions in Egypt because the final solution, the situation in Egypt after this time will be key for the country, will be key for the region and will be key for the European Union, for our common future in the region. I insist from our point of view; more Europe, more involvement, more engagement, and working very close with those trying to lay bridges and find solutions".</p>	00:01:38
00:03:48	<p>SOUNDBITE (English) Bernardino LEON, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean Region: "The Egyptians are always very worried about possible interferences from abroad, so we also have to play in a very diplomatic way our role, this is important; it is probably less attractive from the point of view of a stating the principles but more pragmatic to contribute to a solution that to try to work discreetly; talking very clearly, very frankly to our interlocutors there. I insist as I said before in my intervention that the Government made a mistake in the way that they did not look for a strong consensus."</p>	00:00:54
00:04:42	<p>General view of the meeting</p>	00:00:14
00:04:56	<p>End</p>	00:00:00

