

Romanian MEP hits out at "double standards" towards his country

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News

Former government minister, Dan Nica, has accused critics of treating Romanian citizens as “second-class EU citizens” during parliament's last plenary session.



Photo credit: European Parliament Audiovisual

Romanian Socialist MEP Dan Nica has accused those criticising his country's government of applying “double standards.”

Speaking in the Strasbourg parliament, he was referring to the ongoing debate about the rule of law in Romania, current holder of the EU presidency.

Nica, a former government minister, accused critics of treating Romanian citizens as “second-class EU

citizens”.

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Nica said, “If you don’t have rights and freedoms for your citizens, you don’t have the rule of law.”

As well as the judicial reform programme, he also referred to the ongoing debate surrounding Laura Kovesi, parliament’s choice to become the EU’s first chief public prosecutor.

He said that in 2009, she was the General Prosecutor of Romania who signed the first “secret protocol with the intelligence services.”

“Romanians are sensitive to this issue because they were victims of abuse during the Communist era.” **Dan Nica MEP**

Nica said as a “series of such secret protocols have been revealed over the past two years, Romanians have been horrified to find out about them and the abuse and abominable injustice created by them.”

He added, “Romanians are sensitive to this issue because they were victims of abuse during the Communist era. They don’t want judges being blackmailed or prosecutors being wiretapped or secretly filmed in their bathrooms and bedrooms, so they become vulnerable to blackmail.”

Referring to “other examples of double standards” he said Romanians complain about – low-quality food products and pharmaceuticals sold into the Romanian market, and its exclusion from the Schengen zone – the deputy said the nation’s citizens are “increasingly angry.”

“The EU needs a strong Public Prosecutor's Office with a bold and competent Chief Prosecutor to set an example for national prosecutors in the member states” **Inge Gräßle MEP**

“They reject this discrimination which is grounded in absolutely nothing and is truly undeserved.”

However, during a plenary debate this week, the EPP group demanded that changes to the Romanian law “undermining European values, as well as the intimidation of Kovesi, must stop now.”

Inge Gräßle, chairwoman of parliament's Budgetary Control Committee, said: “The EU needs a strong Public Prosecutor's Office with a bold and competent Chief Prosecutor to set an example for national prosecutors in the member states who protect our finances, taxpayers’ money from corruption and

other misuse. Kovesi is that person. She has our full support.”

“Romania's attempt to sabotage her candidature is shameful and looks like a vendetta commanded by a Social Democrat leadership that fell under her investigation against corruption. The EU should not reward the Romanian government for this unacceptable action”, added Gräßle.

“The attempts by the Romanian Government to water down anti-corruption legislation and weaken judicial safeguards remain a concern.” **Roberta Metsola MEP**

Roberta Metsola MEP, EPP spokeswoman in the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee, added, “Romanians deserve the same respect for European values as everyone else in the EU. The attempts by the Romanian Government to water down anti-corruption legislation and weaken judicial safeguards remain a concern.”

Metsola added, “The brazen effort of the Romanian authorities to undermine the candidature of Kovesi for the European Public Prosecutor only serves to reinforce our concerns with the situation in Romania. We must stand with those Romanian people demanding that justice does not remain blind and who want an end to corruption.”

“The European Commission must act. If national authorities fail, the EU must make it clear that the Union values of democracy and judicial independence are here for all Europeans”, said Metsola.

About the author

Martin Banks is a senior reporter at The Parliament Magazine

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