Press release | 16.12.2009

Climate change

Crunch time in Copenhagen as EU leaders contemplate sell-out

As EU heads of state and government start arriving at the UN climate summit in Copenhagen, the fate of the talks is in the balance. All the main political issues remain open, with the EU failing to advance its position and worrying reports emerging that it is scaling back its ambitions. Commenting on the UN climate talks and the arrival of the EU heads of state and government, Greens/EFA President **Rebecca Harms** said:

"European leaders arriving in Copenhagen must recognise that the time for sitting on the fence has long passed. EU intransigence is one of the reasons for the lack of progress in the UN climate talks. European heads of state and government will need to take big decisions to step up the EU negotiating position or they will share the responsibility for failure in Copenhagen.

"Clearly, the EU needs to improve its pledge on emissions reductions, with its current 20% target (by 2020 from 1990 levels) behind the pledges of other countries. While the failure to improve the pledge has been blamed on eastern European member states, it is clear that other member states, like Germany, have simply been hiding behind this bloc. Failure by the EU leaders to step up to a 30% emissions reduction pledge would be a nail in the coffin of a sufficient climate deal. The same can be said of the continued failure of the EU to outline a position on long-term climate financing for developing countries.

"Reports that EU is preparing to abandon its 30% reduction target by 2020 are extremely worrying at such a crucial stage in the negotiations. The EU has waved this promise under the noses of all other negotiating parties for 2 years: to revoke it now could jeopardise the talks irreparably. The EU presidency must drop any draft 'back-up' plan that would abandon former promises."

"With further reports showing that the current loopholes in the climate negotiations – notably on 'hot air' (surplus AAUs) and the accounting of emissions from land use and forestry (LULUCF) - could actually lead to an increase in industrialised country emissions (by 2020), it is clearly imperative that these loopholes are resolved. Sweden, the current holder of the EU presidency, is not covering itself in glory in this light. It is putting its national interests ahead of the need for a meaningful climate deal.

"Sweden's proposals on LULUCF could lead to 1 billion tonnes of CO2 per annum being ignored, as a sop to its forestry industry. Meanwhile, allowing Sweden to carry over its surplus AAUs beyond 2012, would give it a loophole greater than the entire emissions of Denmark. Sweden, as holder of the EU presidency, must drop these damaging positions without delay."

Recommended

Press release

Adriaan Ploegh



MEPs urge to strengthen European defence innovation

12.11.2026

Press release

karsten-wurth-unsplash



[Court upholds EU climate rules - EU must now show lead…]

12.11.2026

Press release

©jonathan-marchal

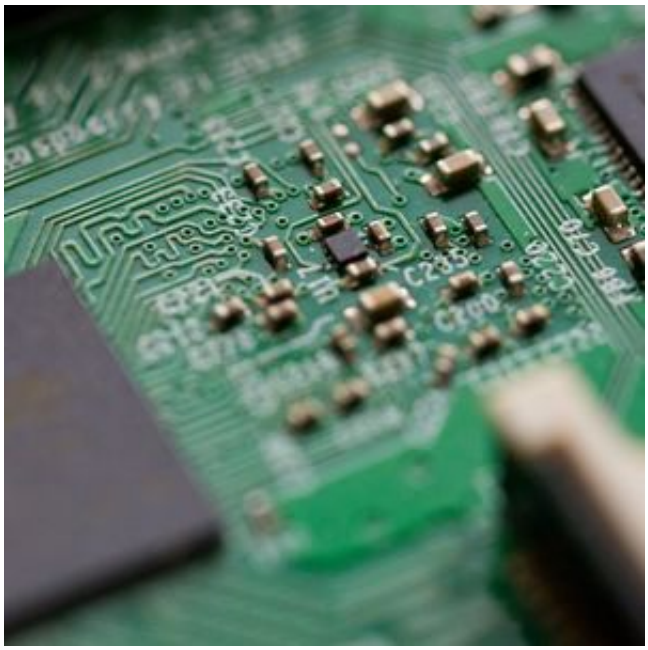


Tilly METZ elected European Parliament Vice-President

12.11.2026

Press release

chris-ried



Digital Fairness Act falls short on addictive design

11.11.2026

Please share

- E-Mail