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Press release | 05.03.2014

Conflict minerals

Timid Commission proposals fall short of what is needed to tackle conflict minerals

The European Commission today presented draft EU legislation on conflict minerals. The Greens expressed regret that the proposals lack ambition and fall short of the comprehensive binding rules on conflict minerals, called for by the European Parliament. Commenting on the proposals, **Judith Sargentini** said:

"These timid proposals from the Commission fall far short of what is needed to tackle the problem of conflict minerals. Coming four years after the US Dodd-Frank Act, what the Commission is now proposing is behind the curve on every front. It is also a far cry from the comprehensive binding legislation called for by the European Parliament last week (1), and we will now push to strengthen this draft during the legislative process.

"The voluntary proposals on supply chain transparency, via a self-certification scheme, lack teeth and will not suffice. On top of this, they would only apply to select companies in the supply chain. The scope is far too restrictive, as it only applies to goods produced in the EU. Given most of the affected consumer goods are produced outside the EU, it would only address the tip of the iceberg.

"Transparency in the supply chain is crucial for preventing conflict minerals from turning up in our consumer products, like phones, laptops and other electronic goods. Meaningful EU rules need to ensure that all companies in the supply chain (from the mine to the end-consumer) should be obliged to comply with OECD due diligence standards. This means investigating their supply chain in order to determine that they do not contribute to conflict. This needs to be backed up with tough sanctions for non-compliance. The Greens will push for this to be changed.

"The extraction of minerals and resources in developing countries should lead to development and the improvement of the lives of their societies at large; it should not be used to fund or fuel conflict, like we have seen in the Central African Republic and the DR Congo. The phenomenon of conflict minerals is now well-known and we have plenty of evidence to act. There can be no excuses."

(1) See press release on the European Parliament's resolution: http://www.greens-efa.eu/conflict-minerals-11890.html

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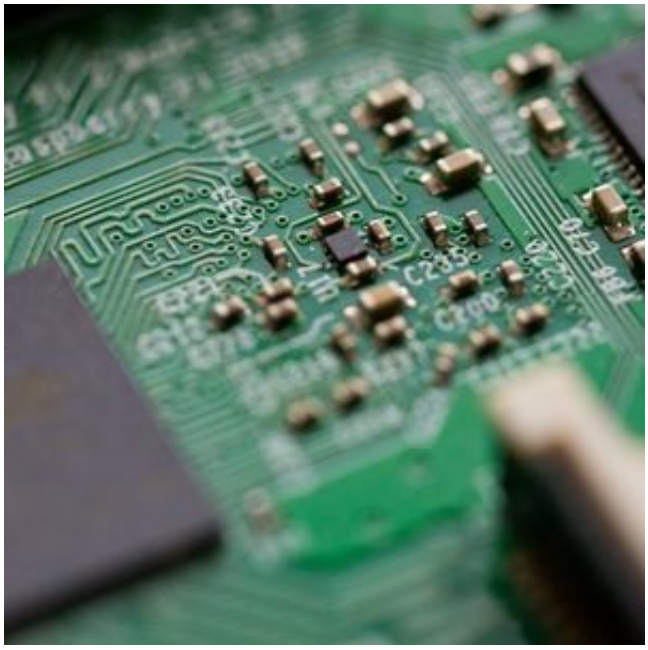


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Judith Sargentini

Member

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