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[Press release](#) | 13.12.2022

Deal welcome on rule of law, Ukraine & tax but national vetoes not fit for the future

COREPER

Last night, a meeting of EU Permanent Representatives agreed to a package deal on several files under the Czech Presidency of the Council. The deal includes: An agreement on the long delayed global minimum tax rate for multinationals of 15%; unblocking €18 billion of aid to Ukraine; approval of the Hungarian Recovery and Resilience Plan; and the continuation of the conditionality mechanism for Hungary with a suspension rate of 55%. The Greens/EFA Group welcomes the approval of the long-blocked files but laments that so many vital files were held up for so long by the national veto of the Hungarian government.

Terry Reintke MEP, Greens/EFA Group President, comments:

“The agreement to maintain the conditionality mechanism is very welcome. It shows that member states have finally agreed that Orban went too far. It shows that there is a majority for action on the rule of law in the Council. The conditionality mechanism is alive. This deal shows that the EU is using the tools at its disposal to start tackling the rule of law crisis in Europe.”

“The aid package to Ukraine is long overdue and essential to support the brave Ukrainians fighting against Putin’s war of aggression. However, the fact that Viktor Orban’s veto held up urgent aid to people suffering from the war in Ukraine is unacceptable. We must never let bullying and blackmail win out.”

Philippe Lamberts MEP, Greens/EFA Group President, comments:

“The approval of the global minimum corporate tax rate is welcome and long overdue. For too long, large corporations have been able to play EU national tax rates off against each other in a race to the bottom. This deal is the first step on the road to tax fairness for multinationals.

“However, this is no way to do business. We cannot have key files constantly up in the air because an autocrat like Viktor Orban is trying to put the squeeze on his fellow EU leaders. It’s time to end national vetoes in the Council if the EU is to have effective policy making moving forward.”

More:

The package agreed last night will be formalised by written procedure. The RRP as approved links the disbursement of €5.8 billion of recovery funds to Hungary to the fulfilment of rule of law milestones mirrored from the conditionality mechanism, as well as additional measures linked to the strengthening of the independence of the judiciary.

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