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ACTA - Anti-counterfeiting agreement

EP to push ahead with ratification procedure and ensure democratic due process

The European Parliament is set to continue with the ratification process for the Anti-counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) and the foreseen timetable with a view to taking a decision as regards whether or not to give its consent by the summer. MEPs on the EP trade committee today decided not to push for a separate referral of ACTA to the European Court of Justice, following a decision by the Commission to refer the agreement. The Greens/EFA group welcomed the decision with Swedish MEP **Amelia Andersdotter** stating:

"The decision to push ahead with the ratification procedure for ACTA is an important step for democratic due process in the EU.

"Should the Commission decide to proceed with its referral of ACTA to the ECJ, this will no doubt bring an important dimension to clarifying the legality of the agreement, however it can be no replacement for the political procedure for verifying this agreement and democratically determining whether its entry into force is in the European interest. Only a democratic ratification process via the European and national parliaments can provide for this, and we therefore welcome today's decision to continue with this process.

"The Greens/EFA group believes this agreement should never have been concluded in the first place - given the serious concerns about its provisions and the shadowy negotiation process - and will push for its rejection by the EP.

"There are widespread concerns about the potentially far-reaching implications of ACTA, whether as regards fundamental rights, internet freedom, freedom of establishment or access to vital medicines. At EU-level, ACTA would block the much-needed reform of EU copyright law and instead lead to a heavy-handed and repressive enforcement of copyright with no regard to the basic rights of citizens. For these and other reasons, the Greens believe ACTA as it stands should be scrapped."

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