Press release | 05.07.2016

EU development aid

Diverting development aid to military projects would be scandalous

The European Commission today presented a controversial proposal to transfer EU development aid, earmarked for peace and poverty reduction, towards military projects in third countries in Africa (1). The Greens hit out at the 'Capacity Building in support of Security and Development proposal, with Green foreign and security policy spokesperson **Reinhard Bütikofer** saying:

"This proposal is nothing short of scandalous. Under pressure from hawkish EU member states, High Representative Mogherini and the Commission have brushed aside legal concerns with this plan to force through this proposal. Funds allocated to the Peace and Stability Instrument should be used for civilian conflict prevention and other measures addressing the root causes of conflict via non-military means. This fund is based on the development cooperation article of the EU Treaty and should therefore not be used for security and military purposes (2). We also oppose the mooted transfer of additional funds from the Development Cooperation Instrument, which are earmarked explicitly for poverty reduction, to projects with military ends. This is wrong on many levels and would create a very worrying precedent as regards how the EU budget is used. We will work to secure a majority in the EU Parliament to block this proposal."

Green development policy spokesperson **Heidi Hautala** added:

"Robbing from Peter to pay Paul would be bad enough in the context of the increasing pressure on development aid but to transfer those funds to projects with a military background is shameful. The refugee and migration crisis keeps driving home the point that we need to do more to address the legitimate reasons why people are fleeing to Europe. We should be using EU funds to address these problems. What the Commission is proposing today is totally the wrong approach to take."

(1) In the context of the proposed 'Capacity Building in support of Security and Development' the idea has been raised to transfer €100 million in funds to the Instrument for Stability and Peace from the Development Cooperation Instrument to finance new projects aimed at supporting the military in third countries.

(2) The EU's Development Cooperation Instrument and Instrument for Peace and Stability are both based on articles 209/212 in the EU Treaty, which state that development funds must prioritise poverty reduction and explicitly rules out their use for military ends (this primary and secondary law has been confirmed by the European Court of Justice).

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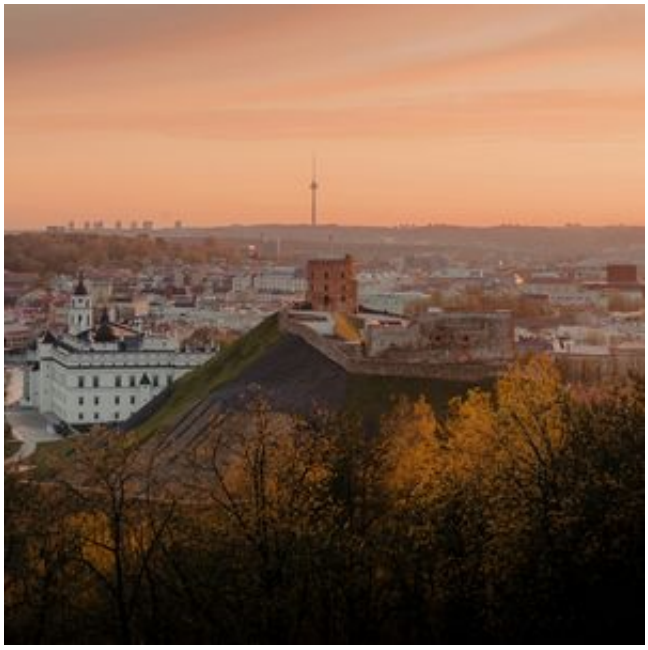
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Member



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