Press release | 27.01.2010

EU-Russia

Duma blocks all mention of human rights

On the occasion of the 12th meeting of the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, **Werner Schulz**- Greens-EFA MEP and Vice-Chair of the EUDelegation - commented:

"The best we can say about this meeting is that it took place at all. Unfortunately the two Delegations could not find a compromise for the final statement, with the Russian side blocking any common position regarding fundamental issues such as human rights and civil society. They refused even a simple and uncritical statement of facts, such as the Duma's ratification of Protocol 14 of the European Convention on human rights and a mention of the award of the EU Parliament's Sakharov Prize to Russian NGO Memorial and human rights defenders in the country. Without our insistence, the Sakharov Prize would not even have been on the agenda.

The blocking by members of the Russian Duma raises questions about the real consequences of recent high-minded statements by President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin on improving the situation of human rights activists in the Northern Caucasus. I still have hope that we can move forward in our common understanding of the universal value of human rights. One of our conclusions is to have deeper discussions in our meeting in Perm in May."

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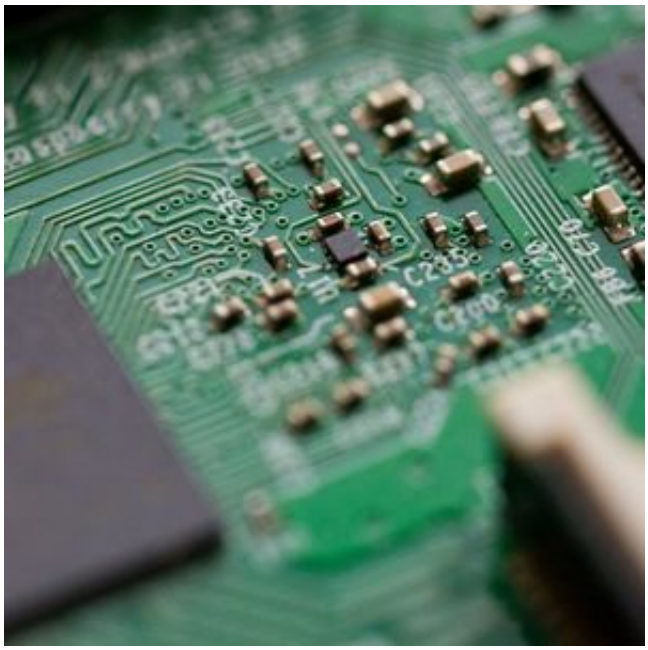


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