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EU summit

Flagship energy union project risks being stillborn

EU heads of state and government will meet for a summit on Thursday and Friday, with proposals for a European energy union and relations with Russia at the top of the agenda. Ahead of the summit, Greens/EFA co-presidents **Rebecca Harms** and **Philippe Lamberts** said:

"The energy union should be a flagship project for Europe over the coming years but there is a real risk it will be stillborn, as EU leaders look set to strip it of any convincing future-oriented approach. Leaked drafts of the 'conclusions' to be adopted by heads of state and government indicate the overarching focus is on finding new supply routes for gas and reviving nuclear power, rather than trying to wean us off our damaging dependence on unreliable fossil fuel exporting countries. If the EU wants to get serious about energy security, it should be working together to prioritise energy efficiency and home-grown renewable energy as the first line of defence. Instead, this energy union seems to be placating vested interests in the energy sector.

"Despite 2015 being a make or break year for the international climate negotiations, EU leaders look set to simply kick the can down the road. The clock is ticking quickly down towards the crunch UN climate summit in Paris in December (COP21) but EU governments clearly do not seem to care about adopting a proactive approach to ensure the EU plays a role in securing a positive outcome: an ambitious global agreement to limit warming to below 2 degrees, which is necessary to prevent catastrophic climate change.

"Yet again, EU governments are using the very prominent stage of an EU summit to highlight their disunity on Russia. This division, whether as regards to sanctions or other issues, completely undermines the ability of the EU to help support pluralism and fundamental rights in Russia and to shape an outcome to the crisis in Ukraine in the interest of the Ukrainian people. In terms of the outcome of the Minsk negotiations, it is not yet the moment for the EU to scale down sanctions on Russia. Until there is no control of the Russia-Ukraine border in the Donbass region, there is no stability."

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