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Press release | 30.03.2012

EU-Ukraine Association Agreement

Further steps must be dependent on real progress on basic rights and democratic reforms

An Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine will be initialed this afternoon. The Greens are calling for further progress and the full signature of the agreement to be made dependent on substantial progress on democratic reforms and the guarantee of basic rights in Ukraine. Commenting on the situation, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** said:

"This procedural step ensures there is a final text, following months of negotiations, however the EU must not commit to any further steps towards an Association Agreement until Ukraine makes real progress on democratic reforms and basic rights. In practise, this means the EU and its member states should postpone any plans to finally sign the agreement until after the parliamentary elections in October at the very earliest. There should be free and fair elections, as well as substantial efforts to guarantee political plurality and to address major human rights concerns, as preconditions before any further steps are taken."

Green MEP **Werner Schulz** added:

"While today's initialing may have been necessary for procedural purposes, the signature and implementation of this agreement, which is of far more importance for Ukraine than the EU, must be put on ice pending real progress in Ukraine. The Ukrainian authorities and president Yanukovych need to demonstrate they are committed to the values on which EU partnership is dependent.

"This means ensuring October's elections are free and fair, and devoid of fraud. It also means that absurd, politicised rulings against opposition politicians are redressed. The seriously ill opposition leader Julia Timoshenko should be immediately granted medical treatment.

"The rule of law in Ukraine is in danger, with Yanukovych becoming an ever more authoritarian ruler. The EU must stand behind the Ukrainian people and civil society and insist on the upholding of basic democratic standards and the rule of law."

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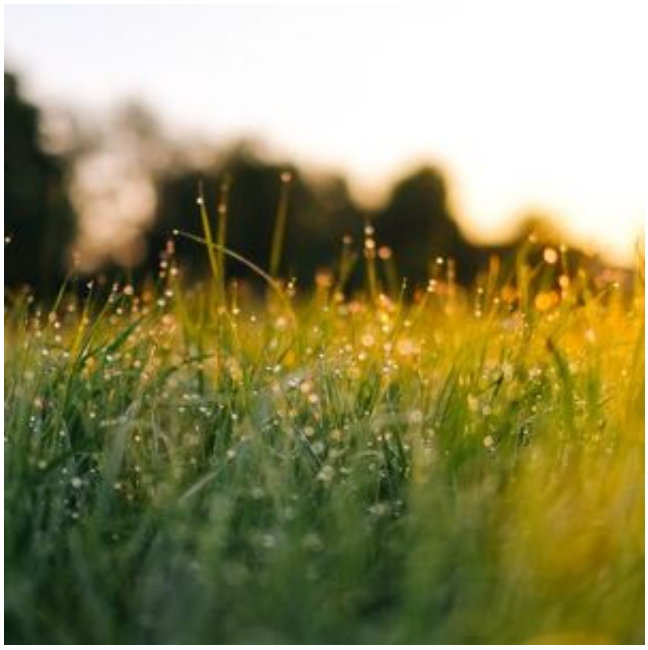
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Rebecca Harms

Member

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