Press release | 12.11.2009

EU-US bank data agreement

EU Council must not sign away EU citizens' data protection rights

The Swedish Presidency of the EU has been negotiating an EU-US agreement on sharing 'SWIFT' bank transfer information, due to be concluded on 30 November, the day before the Lisbon Treaty is expected to be ratified. German Green MEP **Jan-Philipp Albrecht**, a member of the European Parliament's civil liberties committee, commented:

"The EU Council is set to sign away EU citizens' legal and data protection rights in a negotiated agreement that will allow US security authorities to access information on bank transfers from the EU.

Scandalously, the planned agreement openly provides for further transfer of information to third parties and states, when it should be expressly prohibiting the forwarding of such sensitive data. The text also fails to grant a clear right of scrutiny to an independent data protection body.

Only last month, the Swedish EU Presidency told the European Parliament that the legal protection of EU citizens was a red line on this issue. Now the Council is displaying cynical haste to sign away data protection rights on the very last day before Parliament can step in and defend them under a ratified Lisbon Treaty.

EU interior and justice ministers must hit the brakes and make a stand against an intransigent US government. We need internationally binding data protection rules."

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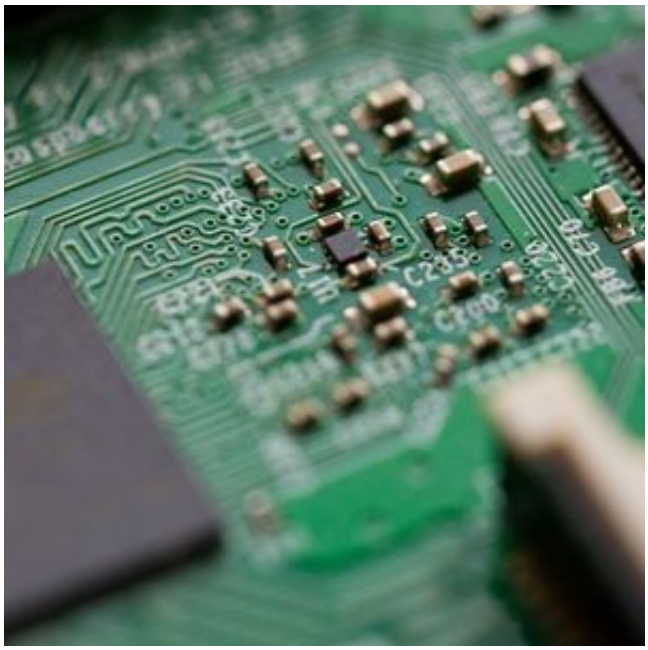


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