Press release | 03.05.2011

EURONEST

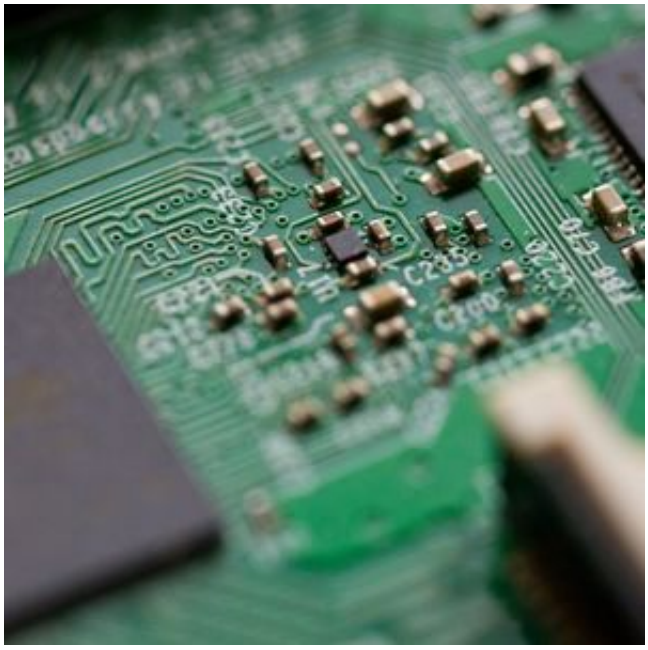
Belarus has to wait for now

Commenting on today's constitutional meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Eastern Partnership EURONEST, Green MEP**Werner Schulz**, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, said: **"I am pleased and openly welcome the fact that EURONEST, after many negotiations and months of delay, can finally start its activities. The Eastern Partnership will be strengthened with this new dimension of cooperation that was lacking up to now. "Supporting civil society with the aim of promoting greater democracy and civic engagement is something I am very committed to. However, in addition to this, contact at a political level with parliamentarians in the partner countries should contribute to a better and more widespread understanding of democracy and human rights in all six partner countries (1), while we work with them to introduce EU-standards, "The fairly new program of the Eastern Partnership, with its aim of promoting democratic reforms in the Eastern neighbouring countries, has so far seen success in Moldova but also backlashes in Belarus and Ukraine. In the case of Belarus it was the right decision not to invite parliamentarians that were chosen in unfair elections and that support a ruthless despot as President. As long as massive repression of the oppositions continues and as long as elections are openly manipulated, Belarus should stay out of EURONEST."** Note to editors: 1) Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

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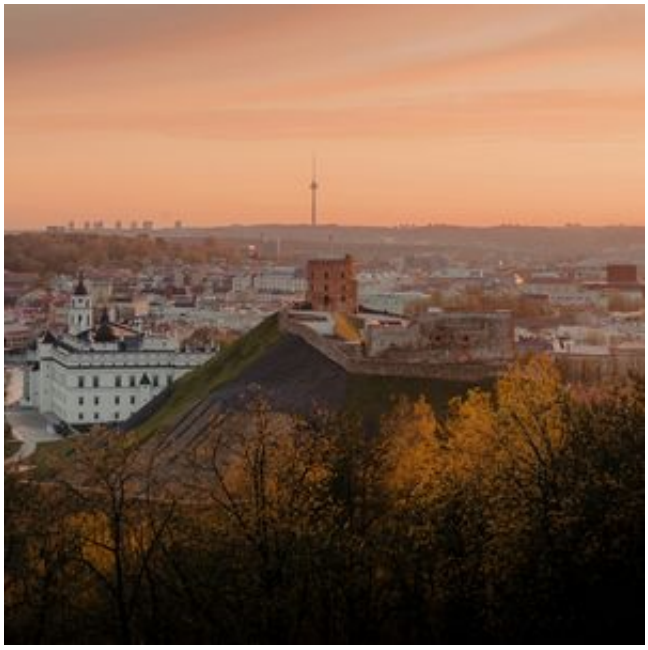
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