Press release | 25.06.2018

European Parliament calls on the EU to take a stand against Viktor Orban's assault on democracy

Hungary

The European Parliament has backed a report from Greens/EFA MEP **Judith Sargentini** for EU Member States to trigger Article 7 sanctions procedures against Hungary. Since Prime Minister Viktor Orban's re-election in April the Hungarian government has continued its authoritarian crack down on civil society, academia and freedom of speech. Last week the Hungarian government passed the "Stop Soros" package of laws which aim to single out NGOs working on migration in the country and will make it almost impossible for organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to continue their operations in Hungary.

"How long will the EU stand by and watch Hungary's 'illiberal' descent away from democracy? The rights of the Hungarian people to free speech and equality under the law must be protected from Viktor Orban's desire to drive the country into authoritarianism. It's time for the EU to stand-up to Orban for the Hungarian people and defend our shared values of freedom of speech and the rule of law," said Judith Sargentini MEP.

The report, which looks into the infringement of fundamental principles and values by the Hungarian government, recommends that the European Council initiate proceedings against Hungary in accordance with Article 7 which would see the country lose voting rights in the Council. The findings which were drawn up by the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs committee and supported by the Budgetary Control, Constitutional Affairs, Culture and Education, Women's Rights and Gender Equality committees, will now be voted on by the whole European Parliament in September.

The text takes into account input from a wide range of experts and representatives, including those of the Commission, the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, the United Nations, OSCE as well as national and international courts. Judith Sargentini MEP also visited Hungary in January as part of her investigation.

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Judith Sargentini

Member

Contact person



David Weir

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