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Greens/EFA call for EU Defence Ministers to end arms exports to autocracies & stand up for human rights in Kazakhstan

Strategic Compass/Kazakhstan

Today and tomorrow, EU Defence Ministers are meeting in Brest, France, to discuss the broad outlines of the European Security and Defence Policy until 2030. Ministers will discuss the "Strategic Compass" presented by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in November.

The crisis in Kazakhstan exposes the urgent need for improved European coordination and a halt to arms exports to autocracies. So far in the EU, only the German government has decided on an embargo on arms exports to Kazakhstan. There will be an urgent debate on the situation in Kazakhstan during next week's plenary session in Strasbourg, as requested by the Greens/EFA Group.

Alviina Alametsä MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Security and Defence, and Foreign Affairs committees, comments on the Strategic Compass:

"The Strategic Compass is an opportunity to build European security and defence towards our shared goals. But, a European defence policy must go hand in hand with European control and debate. While it is important that we cooperate more closely on policy-making, we urgently need more transparency and parliamentary scrutiny at EU level, including when it comes to arms exports.

"EU Ministers must take the opportunity of the Strategic Compass to build EU policies based around peace, for example by tackling arms exports to war zones and dictators who commit human rights violations. We need to advance new EU legislation, harmonise the policies of EU member states and effectively promote peace and security."

Viola von Cramon MEP, Greens/EFA member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, comments on the situation in Kazakhstan:

"The crisis in Kazakhstan should make everyone realise how dangerous it is to export arms to autocratic states. The Kazakh President is pushing a misleading narrative to portray peaceful demonstrators as terrorists and to divert attention from decades of corruption and enrichment of those in power.

"We demand an end to violence against protesters and arbitrary arrests. The Kazakh president should withdraw the shoot-to-kill order, stop escalation, and make sure that the sovereignty of Kazakhstan is upheld through timely withdrawal of CSTO soldiers from the country. We call for a diplomatic initiative, such as an EU task force, to bring the parties involved to the table."

More:

EU Foreign Ministers will meet Thursday, 13 January and Friday, 14 January.

The Greens/EFA have presented a proposal for an EU regulation on arms exports and call for parliamentary control of EU arms exports:

Greens/EFA Briefing.

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