Press release | 17.04.2012

Human Rights

Human Rights Court must not be scaled back; EU must finally accede to Convention

In the context of this week's Council of Europe summit in Brighton (18-20 April), the UK presidency will press its plans for the reform of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), with the representatives of the 47 member states set to adopt a declaration on the reform of the court. The Greens are opposed to the UK plans to weaken the ECtHR, with Green MEP and chair of the European Parliament Sub-Committee on Human Rights **Barbara Lochbihler** stating:

"While some of the proposed reforms would strengthen the European Human Rights system, the UK has again underlined its intention to weaken the European Court of Human Rights. The Strasbourg court plays a vital role in defending human rights across Europe and the ministers must reject this attempt to scale back the competences of the court.

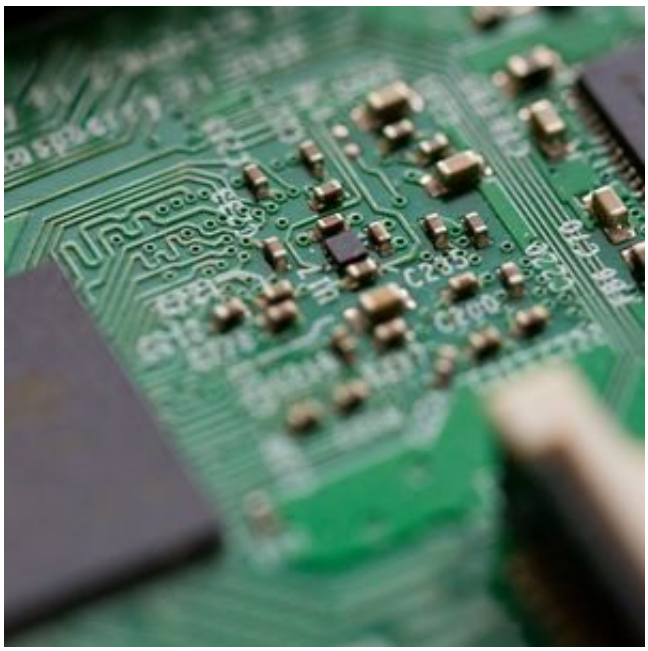
"The proposals to allow national courts greater room to 'interpret' the European Human Rights Convention risk undermining the jurisprudence of the European Court, enabling a kaleidoscope of human rights law to emerge across the 47 member states. The planned reforms would also limit the possibilities of individuals to bring cases before the Strasbourg court, undermining their ability to defend their human rights. EU ministers, in particular, must oppose these proposals.

"It is also high time that the EU joins the European Convention on Human Rights. Despite this being explicitly set out in the Lisbon Treaty, the EU's membership remains blocked in the EU Council of Ministers, undermining EU human rights policy. The European Parliament has made its position clear and EU ministers must urgently take the final steps to allow the EU to join the Convention."

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Barbara Lochbihler

Member

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