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Press release | 08.12.2010

Migrant workers rights

Greens/EFA urge EU to ratify the UN migrant workers convention

At a press conference in the European Parliament, held jointly with **"December 18"**, a network for the promotion and protection of the rights of migrant workers, the Greens/EFA today urged the European Union to ratify the UN migrant workers convention (1): After the press conference, Green MEP **Ska Keller** said:

"I support the initiative by December 18 (2) and ask all Member States to ratify the convention. Again and again we hear of migrant workers being exploited in the EU, be it in agriculture, construction or the health sector. We cannot just watch on and see how migrant workers go without pay or proper pay, and without housing and social rights. At the moment we have a utility approach, taking everything that they can give us but not giving them rights in return. This must change to a rights based approach. We will continue to bring this topic to the attention of the European Parliament and ask the Commission to pressure the Member States to sign this very crucial UN convention."

Notes to Editors:

1) The full name of the Convention is: 'International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families'.

2) December 18's petition campaign was launched on the 1st of July, the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Migrant Workers Convention in 2003. This initiative was initially sponsored by 42 prominent figures of international civil society, including trade union leaders such as Sharan Burrow (Secretary General of the ITUC) and John Monks (Secretary General of the ETUC), as well as human rights activists like Jane Birkin and Irene Fernández.

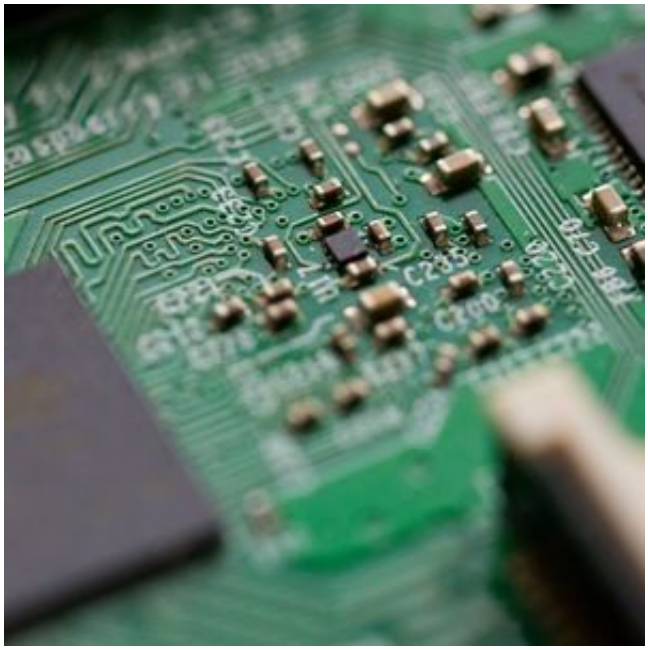
Over the last six months, more than 5,000 signatures have been collected from all 27 EU Member States and beyond. The list of signatures includes over 59 MEPs from 21 Member States and 5 different political groups, as well as civil society organisations, faith-based groups and trade unions at the national, European and international level.

One of the most tangible achievements of December 18's petition campaign is the tabling of a written declaration calling on EU Member States to ratify the UN Migrant Workers Convention. The declaration is sponsored by MEPs Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Franziska Keller (Greens/EFA), Sylvie Guillaume (S&D) and Sonia Alfano (ALDE), and will be open for signatures on Monday the 13th of December, during the December plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

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Ska Keller

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