Press release | 12.02.2014

NSA scandal - EP inquiry

Majority of MEPs votes to leave Edward Snowden in the lurch

The final report of the European Parliament's inquiry into the mass surveillance revelations by Edward Snowden was today voted on in the EP's civil liberties committee. The Greens acknowledged some of the important recommendations in the report but hit out at the failure of centre-right and socialist MEPs to back a call for granting protection to Edward Snowden. Commenting after the vote, Green justice and home affairs spokesperson **Jan Philipp Albrecht** stated:

"Centre-right and socialist MEPs have voted to leave whistleblower Edward Snowden in the lurch by rejecting an amendment calling for Snowden to be granted protection in the EU (1). Edward Snowden's brave revelations have provided the basis for this inquiry and failing to recognise this vital contribution by calling for his protection is a display of cowardice, which is borne out of a desire not to offend the US. This is a cop-out. We will retable the amendment when the EP votes as a whole in plenary on the report and urge other MEPs to support the call.

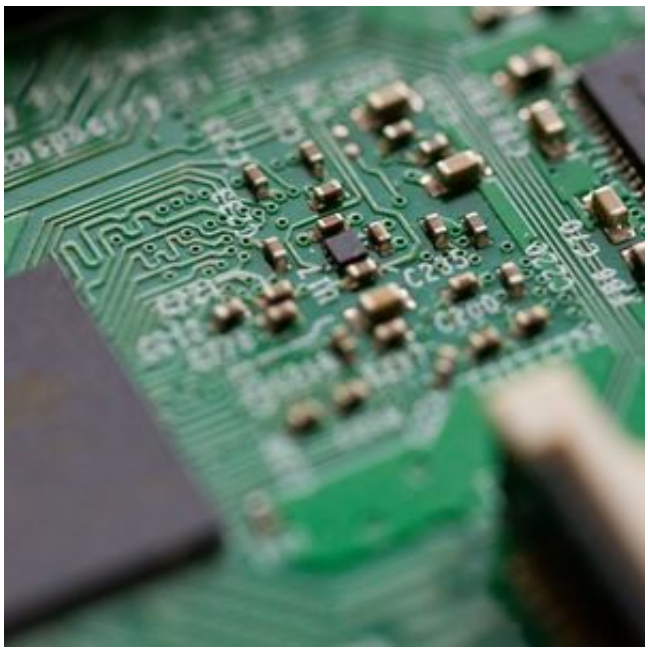
"Other aspects of the final report were more positive however, notably the call for the suspension of the 'Safe Harbour' decision, which facilitates the transfer of EU citizens' data to US authorities by private operators. This is a legitimate response to the mass surveillance of EU citizens by the NSA and the lack of recourse for EU citizens in the US. The report rightly calls on European secret services to uphold EU law and fundamental rights. However, this underlines that the EP's inquiry is only the initial phase in the response to this surveillance scandal: it is now over to national governments and parliaments in the EU to follow-up."

(1) The amendment (number 182) can be found at:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fNONSGML%2bCOMPARL%2bPE-527.988%2b01%2bDOC%2bPDF%2bV0%2f%2fEN

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Jan Philipp Albrecht

Member

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