Press release | 14.12.2016

Poland

It's time to trigger Article 7

A debate will take place this afternoon in the European Parliament on the state of rule of law and democracy in Poland. The Greens/EFA Group will call for the use of Article 7.

Last week, representatives of the Polish government announced their intention to withdraw Poland's signature from the Istanbul Convention. The Polish parliament also decided just last night to restrict the freedom of assembly and demonstration.

Commenting ahead of the debate, Greens/EFA coordinator of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality **Terry Reintke** said:

"After Hungary, we are experiencing a systematic restraint on the fundamental rights of all citizens in Poland. We cannot tolerate this. After the weak replies from the Polish government to the European Commission's questions, it is now time to trigger Article 7.

"The Polish government seems to be afraid that its intention to withdraw its ratification of the Istanbul Convention could fail in the face of protests of women. In order to prevent civil protests, democratic rights are being undermined. We have to send a very clear signal that this stands in clear contrast to our common European values. We will continue to be on the side of Polish women and will fight together to ensure that basic rights in Poland are not further restricted.

"The current situation in Poland demonstrates again the need for a mechanism to ensure that the Copenhagen criteria continue to be met after accession to the European Union."

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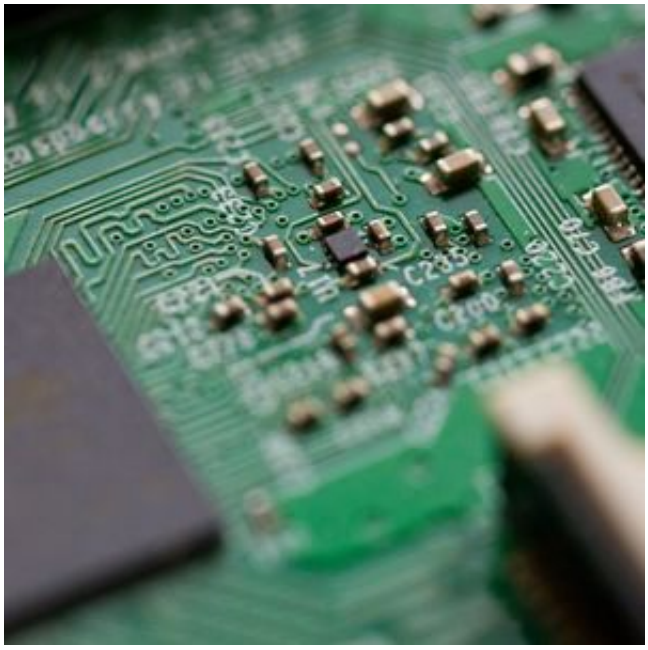


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