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Press release | 06.04.2022

Rule of law: MEPs urge Council to take action on rule of law through Article 7

Today, on the initiative of the Greens/EFA Group, MEPs will debate the ongoing proceedings under Article 7(1) against the Hungarian and Polish governments. The Article 7 procedures, designed to look into rule of law breaches, have been stuck in the Council. The French Presidency is expected to hold a hearing on the Article 7(1) procedure in the General Affairs Council on 30 May, and held a hearing of the Polish government on 22 February. The Greens/EFA Group are calling on the Council to come out with recommendations for the Hungarian and Polish governments on how to reestablish the rule of law in both countries.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Greens/EFA Member and European Parliament Rapporteur for the situation in Hungary, comments:

"The Hungarian government acts like the rule of law and that European values do not apply to them. The Council has so far dealt with the Article 7 procedure in an untransparent and erratic way, by even failing to organise regular hearings of the Polish and Hungarian governments.

"In Hungary, we are now in a situation where huge media concentration, funding cuts to opposition municipalities and unregulated political financing have prepared the ground to Fidesz re-election, without any democratic prospects for Hungarian citizens. We need to see evidence that the Council is willing to stand up for the rule of law in Europe and push ahead with the Article 7 process and issue recommendations on how to move forward without delay."

Terry Reintke, Greens/EFA Member and shadow rapporteur on Poland in the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee, comments:

"Inaction on the rule of law emboldens autocracy and undermines democracy and fundamental rights. The situation in Poland gets worse every day and yet fellow EU Member States continue to stand by and do nothing.

"The rule of law must be preserved in Poland and in Europe. It is time for the Council to act on the Article 7 procedures and to provide concrete recommendations with deadlines, for both Poland and Hungary.

More:
The debate will take place from 15:00 and can be followed live here.

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