Press release | 21.06.2016

Russia

Prolonging EU sanctions correct and necessary

EU governments today agreed in principle to prolong the sanctions against Russia put in place after the war in the Donbas Region. Commenting on the decision, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** said: *"This decision is correct and necessary given the Russian authorities are still refusing to take steps to ensure peace and stability in the region. As long as the goals of the Minsk agreement are not achieved, the EU has to continue to use all the non-military tools at its disposal to exert pressure on Russia. "The Ukrainian government will only be able to fulfil its side of the Minsk agreement and hold regional elections once it regains control of its borders in the east; for this to happen, Putin must withdraw his support for separatists in the region. The Ukrainian authorities must prepare the legislative ground but it is clearly not possible to hold democratic elections in the context of an armed stand-off.*

"In this challenging context, it is important that the EU continues to use diplomacy and sanctions to push for peace in eastern Ukraine and to make clear that Russia's breach of international law in Ukraine has consequences. Today's decision underlines the EU's commitment to support stability in Ukraine and this is crucial for the security of the entire continent."

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Rebecca Harms

Member

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