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Press release | 30.09.2013

Sakharov Prize

Edward Snowden makes shortlist for EU freedom of thought prize after Green nomination

Whistleblower Edward Snowden was today included in the three-person shortlist for this year's Sakharov Prize, following a vote in the European Parliament (1). Earlier this month, Snowden was nominated by the Greens/EFA group for the EU's annual award for 'freedom of thought' in recognition of his role in shedding light on the mass surveillance practises of the US and European secret services. After the vote, Greens/EFA co-presidents **Rebecca Harms** and **Dany Cohn-Bendit** stated:

“Today's vote to include Edward Snowden on the shortlist for this year's Sakharov Prize is an official recognition by the European Parliament of the enormous service he has done for human rights globally and for European citizens. The Greens/EFA group nominated Edward Snowden for the EU's freedom of thought award because we believe he epitomises that which the prize intends to recognise.

"Edward Snowden has risked his freedom to help us protect ours and he deserves to be honoured for shedding light on the systematic infringements of civil liberties by US and European secret services. Instead of being given asylum in the EU, he has been abandoned by cowardly European governments. We hope his inclusion on the shortlist for the Sakharov Prize can serve as a symbol of rejection of this gross, massive and illegal intrusion into the privacy of citizens worldwide. It should also send a message to European governments that Edward Snowden deserves our support and protection."

(1) The Sakharov Prize is an award conferred annually by the European Parliament on individuals who combat fanaticism, intolerance or oppression. Political groups of the European Parliament can make one nomination for the award. The Parliament's foreign affairs, development and human rights committees today voted to select a shortlist of 3 of the nominated candidates. The final decision will be taken by the Parliament's conference of presidents in October. More details: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/00f3dd2249/Sakharov-Prize-for-Freedom-of-Thought.html

* A statement by Edward Snowden was read out in the European Parliament's civil liberties committee today at the same time as the vote.

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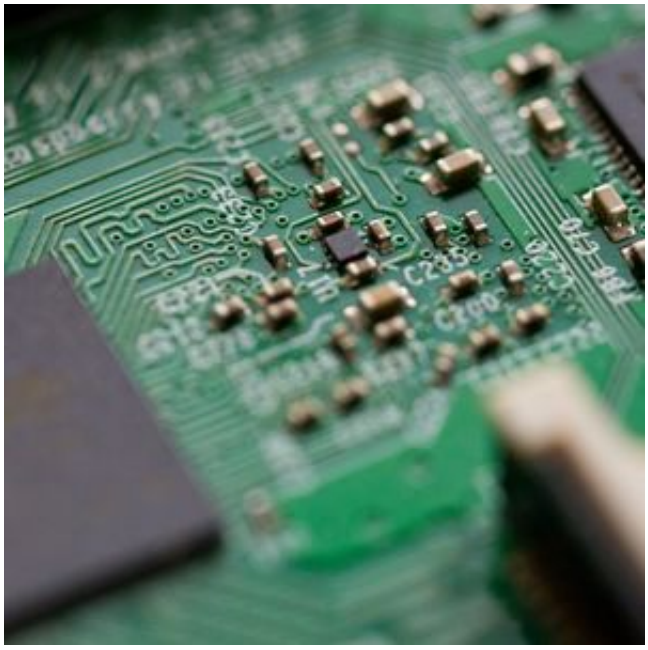


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Rebecca Harms

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