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State of the Union

European Union still best answer to the challenges we face

Commenting on today's State of the Union address from President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** said:

"The European Union, with all its achievements and its shortcomings, is still the best answer to nationalism. We are better able to defend our values and interests if we do it together which is why the EU is the solution to the insecurities caused by globalization. But we must act now if we are to regain our citizens' confidence.

"EU member states must meet their international responsibilities and offer more refugees protection in the European Union. But it is clear that the crisis cannot be solved inside the EU alone which is why we need to step up efforts for refugee protection outside the EU. We need a strategy for Africa and a real immigration law.

"International solidarity is more achievable if there is solidarity within the EU. Many people in Europe today feel defenseless in the face of globalization and the EU must respond to these fears. The investment plan and a stronger Youth Guarantee are steps in the right direction, but more needs to be done.

"Looking to the future, we Greens have a key project - a climate union. The EU must ratify the Paris agreement. Leaving behind the era of fossil fuels has enormous economic potential.

"To the likes of Nigel Farage and other opponents of Europe, I say this: you want to tackle the challenges of tomorrow by returning to the past. This has never been a good idea. It is those who are willing to take the risk of joining together and looking forward that will win the future. The better future of our continent began when we dared to imagine it together."

Greens/EFA co-president **Philippe Lamberts** added:

"The European project is about sovereignty and the ability of democracies to make the choices that shape their future. But in a globalised world, one has to recognize that the only way to keep or regain sovereignty is to share it.

"The field of corporate taxation, recently illustrated by the landmark Apple ruling, demonstrates this brilliantly. When the EU member-states act individually, they are played one against the other by the

multinationals, who are driving us all into an endless race to the bottom. When we act together, we regain the ability to impose our rules, in this case to make sure multinationals pay their taxes.

"This is how the European Union can regain the support of our citizens: by being an instrument to ensure a shared and sustainable prosperity for all."

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