Press release | 05.10.2016

Syria

War crimes in Aleppo require urgent action by the European Union

Commenting on today's debate in the European Parliament, and ahead of tomorrow's vote on a resolution on the escalation in Syria, Greens/EFA group co-president **Rebecca Harms** said:

"The images and reports from Aleppo must open our eyes to the urgency of the situation. Following the Russian attacks on hospitals and medical infrastructure, the European Union must make it clear to Russian President Vladimir Putin that the escalation of the conflict makes the return of normal relations between the EU and Russia impossible. The logic of Russian demands towards the United States and the European Union must be resisted, as this would only reward the aggressor Russia.

"The European Union must be prepared to use its economic weight and continue and extend sanctions against Russia. The North Stream pipeline should also be shelved. The diplomacy of the European Union can only be successful if we are willing to accept that this will come at a cost and are willing to change our energy strategy."

Greens/EFA foreign affairs spokesperson **Barbara Lochbihler** added:

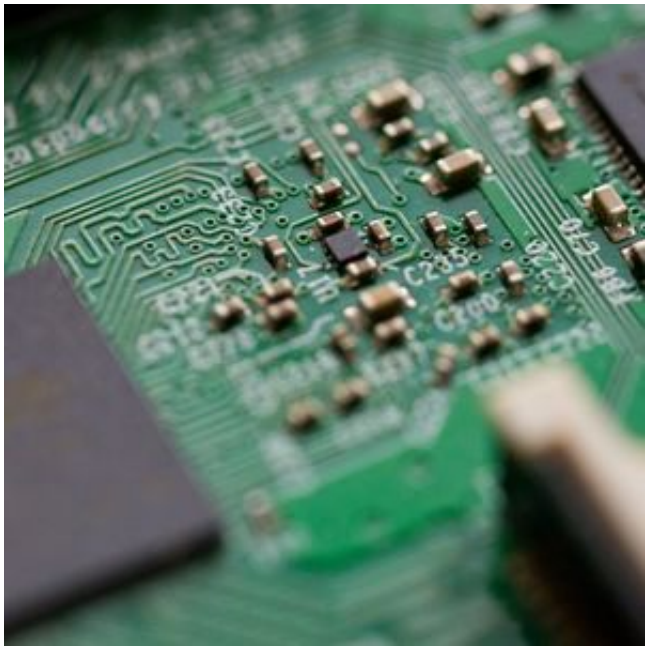
"The bombing of hospitals, attacks on UN aid convoys, and the deliberate starvation of civilians clearly amount to war crimes. There is no question that the European Union must do everything possible to provide humanitarian aid. But this must be combined with an unequivocal response to the massacre by the Russian and Syrian armies.

"From the torture prisons of the Assad regime to the dungeons of the rebels, the war crimes and human rights violations are being committed on all sides of this conflict and it seems that none fear being held accountable. With a no-fly zone not a prospect, and military operations not possible due to the risk of incalculable escalation, the only solution is to return to the negotiating table. The European Union must exert diplomatic and economic pressure on all parties, in particular Iran, Russia, Turkey and the Gulf states."

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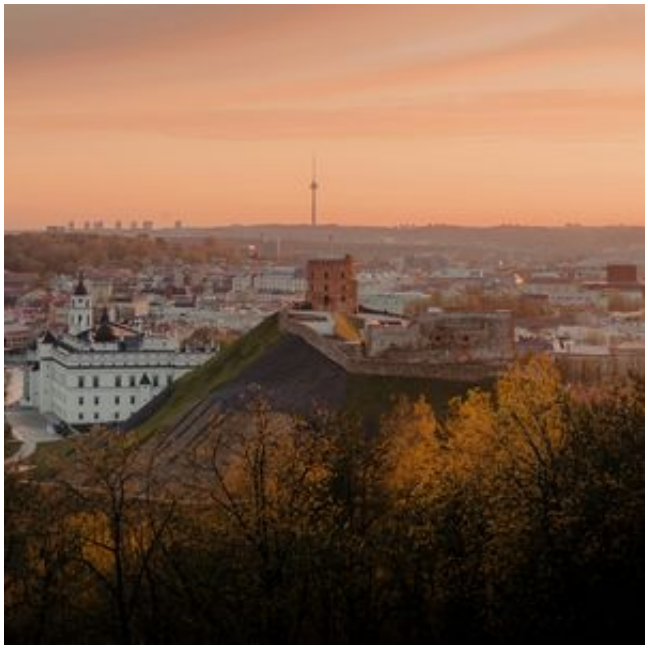
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