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Press release | 28.09.2009

Telecoms package

Negotiations on the telecoms package must be open-minded

The European Parliament delegation to the final stage of the legislative process (1) on the proposed 'telecoms package' will meet for the first time tonight. Speaking ahead of the meeting, **Christian Engström** (Pirate party, Sweden) and **Philippe Lamberts** (Ecolo, Belgium), Greens/EFA members of the European Parliament delegation, said:

"It is almost five months since the European Parliament vote on the telecoms package but the Parliament has yet to receive an explanation for Council's rejection of its position. With the legislation soon to enter its 'third reading' or conciliation phase, it is crucial that the Council and the Swedish Presidency send a reasoned explanation of their demands to the Parliament without delay. The absence of any explanation clearly hampers attempts to reach a compromise.

"It seems that the Council wants to limit the negotiations to a review of the contentious question of whether or not it is possible to block or limit access to the internet for citizens. The European Parliament vote made clear that internet access should not be blocked without a 'prior ruling' by the judicial authorities (2). Now, the only aim of the Council seems to be to reverse the parliament's vote on this issue.

Clearly, such a blinkered approach would be inimical to efforts to reach a workable compromise. The Greens/EFA group is calling for broader and more open-minded negotiations, which aim for legislation that protects citizens' rights and guarantees that the internet stays free and open."

*** *ENDS* ***

Notes to editors:

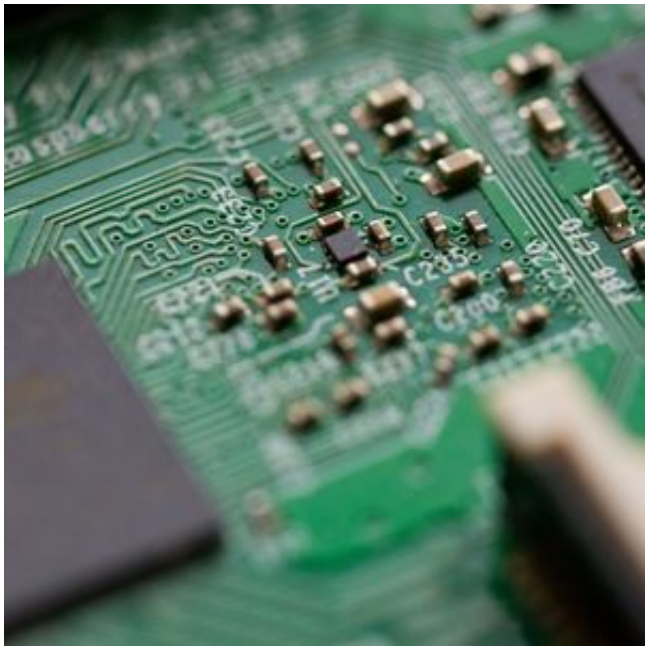
(1) The Council has failed to accept the vote of the European Parliament in second reading and, as a result, conciliation negotiations will now be opened with a view to agreeing a compromise on the legislation. The European Parliament will send a 27 member delegation to the conciliation negotiations and this delegation will meet for the first time tonight.

(2) This was specified in amendment 138, adopted by the European Parliament in its second reading vote.

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Philippe Lamberts

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