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Press release | 05.11.2009

# Telecoms package

## A victory for internet users, but not the end of the line for defending their rights

Yesterday evening, the European Parliament and the EU Council (representing national governments) agreed on a compromise text regarding protection of internet users' rights in cases of action on grounds of alleged copyright infringement, e.g. via online file-sharing.

Greens/EFA MEP **Philippe Lamberts** (Ecolo, Belgium), a member of the European Parliament delegation to the conciliation committee, commented:

***"This agreement is a victory for the pressure from the Greens/EFA Group and from the thousands of citizens who were directly involved in defending their rights as internet users.***

***The message from this EU legislation is now clear: access to internet is a fundamental right and proper procedures must be followed when challenging internet users on alleged copyright infringement. It is now up to national governments to respect this.***

***I am satisfied that we achieved the best possible legal protection we could achieve at this stage. Once the Lisbon Treaty is ratified, the European parliament will have co-legislative powers to defend net neutrality."***

Greens/EFA MEP **Christian Engström** (Pirate Party, Sweden), also a member of the European Parliament delegation to the conciliation committee, commented:

***"The compromise reached is a certainly a victory for internet users in the face of plug-pulling governments, but not the end of the line when it comes to defending their rights.***

***The agreement is a direct result of the hard work by thousands upon thousands of Internet users. They have contacted their politicians, networked on blogs and raised media attention on this issue. Without them, there would have been no progress on this in political circles"***

***I particularly welcome the insistence on a "prior fair and impartial procedure", which puts up a strong line of defence against the draconian "three strikes" Hadopi law in France and similar measures being pushed by Lord Mandelson in the UK.***

***While I welcome that the European Parliament stood firm on cutting an internet connection only under strict rules, I must stress that it is wrong for governments to cut people of from the Internet at all."***

Notes to editors:

(1) The compromise text - as part of the telecoms package as a whole - will go to the European Parliament for a plenary vote on a date to be fixed between 23-26 November in Strasbourg.

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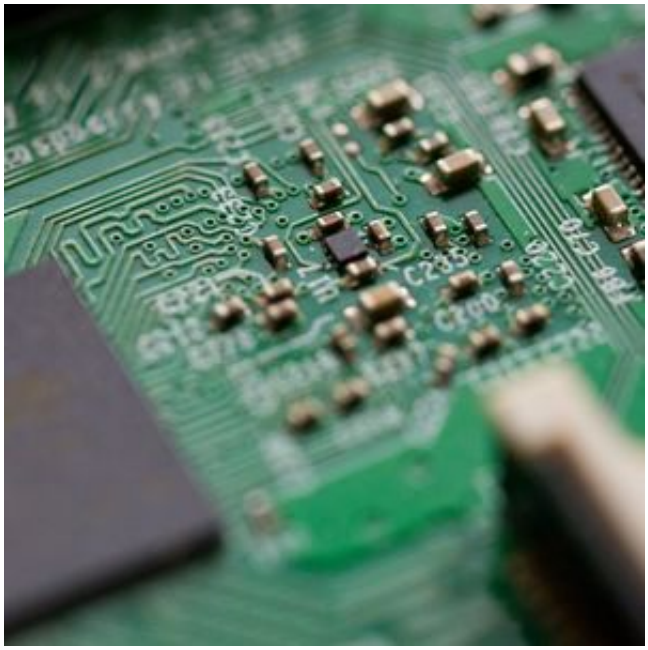


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