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Greens/EFA call for stronger measures against foreign interference

Today, Members of the European Parliament adopted a resolution on allegations of Russian interference in the democratic process of the European Union. This debate follows media reports that MEP Tatjana Ždanoka had regular dealings with Russia's FSB's Fifth Service while also serving as a Member of the European Parliament. The Greens/EFA Group welcomes the swift response of the European Parliament in launching official investigations into the matter. We also urge Latvian authorities to immediately assess whether or not Ms. Ždanoka can continue to sit as a Member of the European Parliament.

Sergey Lagodinsky MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur for the resolution on Russian interference, comments:

“Attempts at espionage and foreign interference with the European Parliament are major threats to our democracy. It is the duty of all political groups to recognise and fight these attempts, no matter their source. In the current case of an MEP accused of interacting with Russian intelligence authorities, we demand and support a complete internal examination and call on the competent authorities to thoroughly investigate.

“In June, millions of Europeans will cast their ballots and decide on who will represent them for the upcoming five years. They have the right to form their own opinion, an opinion based on facts, not on deepfakes, agitation and disinformation. And I expect that the 720 MEPs that will sit in this Chamber will stand up for the interests of the people in our Union and for human rights instead of the interests of aggressors and imperialists and their secret services.”

Heidi Hautala, Greens/EFA MEP, European Parliament Vice-President and Chair in office of the Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members, comments:

“We should not be naive, the European Parliament is not an espionage free zone. Now, an MEP is suspected of contacts with the Russian secret service. This case will be thoroughly investigated by the bodies of this House. However, it should not be treated as an isolated incident. At the moment, The Parliament is not sufficiently prepared to meet and combat the kind of threats that certain foreign powers, such as Russia, pose. We need better cooperation with OLAF, and EPPO, as well as national intelligence agencies. We must do more to guarantee that this Parliament is free of undue influence.”

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