



European Greens support Bogota Protest against murder of 11 politicians

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The Spokespersons of the European Green Party today sent a message of support to the organisers of a protest march due to be held in Bogota, Colombia, on Thursday 5th July. Those taking part in the demonstration will protest against the killing of 11 regional politicians who were being held hostage by the FARC Guerrilla. The circumstances of the killings on June 18th are still unclear as the Colombian Government blames FARC for the murders while FARC claims the hostages were killed in crossfire with an unidentified military group who may have been attempting to rescue the hostages.

EGP Co-Spokesperson Philippe Lamberts said: "The news of the deaths of the regional politicians from Valle de Cauca came as a shock to all of those who have been campaigning for the release of the thousands of hostages being held in Colombia. On behalf of the EGP, I would like to send my condolences to the families of the 11 people killed and urge the FARC to return the bodies of the deceased to their families. The events of 18th June should serve as reminder of the urgent need for a humanitarian accord which leads to the exchange of those politicians, police and military who have been kidnapped by FARC and FARC guerrillas held by the Government.



EGP Co-Spokesperson and Austrian MP Ulrike Lunacek continued: "We urge both FARC and the Colombian government to work with the governments of France, Spain and Switzerland in order to agree to the creation of a temporary demilitarised zone where negotiations can take place. Only such negotiations can put an end to the violence and conflict which the Colombian people have endured for decades. The deaths of the politicians from Valle de Cauca show how dangerous any attempt at an armed rescue of the hostages still being held would be."

Both spokespersons reiterated their support for the international campaign for the immediate and unconditional release of Ingrid Betancourt, leader of the Colombian Green Party (Partido Verde Oxígeno) and Colombian Presidential candidate, her friend and campaign manager, Clara Rojas and all other hostages. " We hope that the protest in Bogota on Thursday 5th June will put pressure on all sides to come to an agreement which will result in the liberation of all those being held against their will," **Lamberts** and **Lunacek** concluded.
