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Government And Opposition Politicians in Kenya Must Urgently Engage In Dialogue

EGP Supports Peace Initiative of Professor Wangari Maathai and others which aims to end political violence in Kenya

The Spokespersons of the European Green Party today called on both government and opposition politicians in Kenya to do everything in their power to end the politically motivated violence which has engulfed the country since the disputed election victory of President Mwai Kibaki on December 27th 2007.

EGP Co-Spokesperson Ulrike Lunacek said: "We in the European Green Party have been deeply saddened by the recent political violence in Kenya which has claimed, according to the latest police figures, the lives of almost 500 people, and forced 250,000 people to flee their homes. We call on all politicians in Kenya, whether they represent the government or the opposition, to call on their supporters to refrain from attacking people who belong to a different ethnic group or are thought to have voted for the other side in the Presidential election. Politicians on all sides must avoid using language or making speeches which could be interpreted as an incitement to violence. The root cause of the violence is widespread frustration among people who believe that the election in December was rigged and that the opposition Orange Democratic Movement was unfairly denied victory, as well as anger caused by the Kibaki government's inability to tackle the serious problem of corruption. Many election observers have said that there were serious and widespread irregularities which mean that the declared result lacks credibility. That is why we believe that the votes should be recounted by an independent body or there should be a rerun of the election. In the meantime, both the opposition and government must engage in dialogue so that a workable resolution of the political crisis can be found quickly."

EGP Co-Spokesperson Philippe Lamberts continued: ".We very much hope that



Kenyan politicians will make the most of the opportunity presented by the talks this week facilitated by the President of Ghana John Kufuor, who is also currently the Chairperson of the African Union. International mediation is vitally important at a time when the political situation in Kenya is so polarised and there is so much mistrust and tension. As European Greens, we want to express our support for and appreciation of the efforts being made by politicians and other leaders to launch a peace initiative aimed at restoring peace and national unity, including the Nobel Peace Laureate and the founder of the Kenyan Green Party and the Greenbelt Movement, Professor Wangari Maathai. Professor Maathai and the other people involved in this initiative are showing exemplary courage and responsibility, in stark contrast to the divisive attitudes of so many Kenyan politicians at this time. The EGP calls on the international community in general and the EU in particular to engage fully in the search for a resolution of the current crisis in Kenya so that peace, good community relations and faith in the democratic process can be restored."
