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European Greens Council makes great progress on preparation of 2009 European Parliament election campaign

The 8th Council of the European Green Party in Ljubljana has ended after 3 days of lively debates and discussion among 250 delegates from 35 member parties, focussing in particular on the preparation of the EGP's Common Campaign for the European Parliament Election in 2009.

EGP Co- Spokesperson Philippe Lamberts said: "This has been a wonderful Council Meeting and we would like to thank our member party SMS for giving us such a warm welcome and for all their work in organising this event. Perhaps the most important achievement of this Council has been the adoption of 3 policy papers on the topics of Climate Change, the Economy and Migration, which will form the basis of a considerable part of our manifesto in our Common Campaign for the 2009 European Parliament elections. We are confident that the valuable input of representatives of our member parties all over Europe means that we will be able to present policies and creative solutions to the problems which most European voters think should be Europe's political priorities. On the Economy, for example, we Greens propose achievable and innovative ways of ensuring that the economy better meets the needs of people, that the market is properly regulated and that economic actors not only have their rights respected but also accept their responsibilities."

EGP Co-Spokesperson Ulrike Lunacek continued: "There is a lot of excitement in those EGP member parties in EU member states about next year's European elections because we know that we have the solutions to Europe's most pressing challenges, including fighting climate change and also in terms of promoting social justice and making the EU more truly democratic. We are confident that the EGP will be able to work well together and so be able to persuade a large number of EU citizens of this so that we can increase our number of MEPs. However, we European Greens are also committed to ensuring that the EU is a global player in the defence of human rights and that is why we passed a resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ingrid Betancourt, the leader and former presidential candidate of the Colombian Green Party who has been held captive by FARC for over 6 years. We also passed a resolution on Tibet, urging the political leaders of the EU and its member states not to attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics if no progress is made in relation to the Tibetan question and to the overall human rights situation in China. The

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resolution also calls on the International Olympic Committee to ensure that athletes participating in the Beijing Olympics are given the right to express their opinions on human rights in Tibet and China."
