



, 14.08.2008

EU must play active role in ensuring peaceful future for Georgia and Caucasus region

The European Green Party today said that the EU must keep its promise to engage fully in efforts to put an end to the conflict in Georgia and ensure that the democratic and human rights of all the peoples of Georgia and the Caucasus are fully respected

EGP Co-Spokesperson Ulrike Lunacek said: “We in the EGP welcome the attempts by the governments of the EU member states and the French Presidency to broker a ceasefire agreement between the governments of Russia and Georgia. However, we must condemn in the strongest possible terms the actions of the Russian military yesterday (Wednesday 13th August) in moving further into Georgian territory and causing tens of thousands of innocent civilians to flee their homes in terror. This was a clear violation of the ceasefire signed by the two sides and there can be no justification for it. The EU must ensure that both sides respect the ceasefire in letter and in spirit. Regardless of who was to blame for the events of August 7th in South Ossetia (and the EGP has already said that the Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili seems to have made some very serious mistakes), the crucial thing now is that the violence stops immediately, Russian troops withdraw from all the areas that they have occupied since then and that humanitarian organisations and journalists are given full and unhindered access to all the areas which have been attacked or where refugees have fled. We strongly support the call today by **French Green MEP Marie Anne Isler-Beguín, Chair of the European Parliamentary Delegation to Georgia**, for the EU to put urgent pressure on the Russian military to allow the setting up of humanitarian corridors. ”

Ulrike Lunacek went on to outline what the EGP sees as the priorities in terms of ensuring a peaceful future for all the peoples of the Georgian republic and the surrounding area: “We welcome the agreement by the EU’s member states that it will play a key role in facilitating a comprehensive and durable peace agreement in Georgia. The EU and the OSCE do everything in their power to persuade both Georgia and Russia to enter into meaningful dialogue about the future of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as only such a dialogue will result in a political solution which combines due recognition of the territorial integrity of Georgia and the legitimate rights of all ethnic minority groups in the Georgian Republic. The EU and its member states must also provide the financial and practical help that Georgia will require if it is to rebuild its infrastructure and economy. ”



Ulrike Lunacek concluded: “ We in the EGP would like again to express our solidarity with the people of Georgia and all the victims of this needless and brutal conflict in South Ossetia and Abkhasia and reiterate our support for our member party , the Green Party of Georgia, as they continue their struggle for democratic values, peace and human rights in a country where these have so often been lacking.”.
