Resolution on the situation in Georgia

2008/2622(RSP) - 03/09/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 1 September 2008, the European Parliament adopted by 549 votes to 68 with 61 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in Georgia. The resolution had been tabled for consideration in plenary by the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, UEN, and Greens/EFA groups. It takes the view that there cannot be a military solution to the conflicts in the Caucasus and expresses its firm condemnation of all those who resorted to force in order to change the situation in the Georgian breakaway territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Members call on Russia to **respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia** and the inviolability of its internationally recognised borders. They strongly condemn the recognition by the Russian Federation of the independence of the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as contrary to international law. They also condemn the **unacceptable and disproportionate military action by Russia** and its deep incursion into Georgia, which violates international law.

Parliament strongly urges Russia to honour all its commitments under the ceasefire agreement reached through the diplomatic efforts of the EU, beginning with the **immediate withdrawal of its troops** from Georgia proper and the reduction of its military presence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia to the Russian force deployed as peacekeepers in the two provinces before the conflict erupted. It demands that an independent international investigation be carried out as a matter of urgency in order to establish the facts and bring greater clarity to certain allegations.

The resolution supports the decision of the European Council to **postpone the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement negotiations** until the withdrawal of the Russian troops to their positions prior to 7 August 2008. It calls on the Council and the Commission to review their policy towards Russia should Russia not fulfil its commitments under the ceasefire agreement.

The resolution's main points are as follows:

Mining: in order to facilitate de-mining operations, the Russian and Georgian authorities must provide full information concerning the areas where their armies dropped cluster bombs.

Visa facilitation and international investigation: Parliament asks the Commission to propose visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Georgia at least equivalent to those for Russia. It calls on Member States to review the issuing of visas for economic activities based in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

ICC: Members urge Georgia, which ratified the Rome Statute of the ICC, and the Russian authorities to lend support to and fully cooperate with the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

European Security and Defence Policy monitoring mission: Members call for a robust contribution by the EU to the planned international mechanism for the resolution of the conflict and welcome the decision of the European Council to deploy an ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) monitoring mission to complement the UN and OSCE missions and to ask for a UN or OSCE mandate for an ESDP peace mission. They welcome in particular the decision to appoint an EU Special Representative for the crisis in Georgia. **Trans-Caucasian Conference for Peace**: the search for solutions to the conflict in Georgia, along with the other unresolved conflicts in the South Caucasus, will benefit from increased internationalisation of conflict resolution mechanisms. Parliament proposes that the EU convene a "Trans-Caucasian Conference for Peace" as a key element of this process. Such a conference should discuss international guarantees concerning full respect for civil and political rights and the promotion of democracy through the international rule of law. **Neighbourhood policy**: the European Neighbourhood

Policy should be developed and more adapted to the needs of our eastern partners, including a strengthening of EU involvement in the Black Sea region. Parliament asks for consideration of its proposal on a European Economic Area Plus or the Swedish-Polish proposal for an Eastern Partnership. It also asks for quicker establishment of a free trade zone in relation to Georgia, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova in particular.

Energy security: Parliament stresses the importance of Georgia in improving EU energy security by providing an alternative to the Russian energy transit route. It is crucial that existing infrastructure such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline be effectively protected. Parliament expects a strong EU political and budgetary commitment in pursuing the Nabucco pipeline project, recognised as an EU priority project that would cross Georgia's territory and representing the most serious alternative to the projects undertaken in cooperation with Russia which will all potentially increase the dependence of Member States on Russia.