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01 October 2008

Curbing the threats of war in Europe

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Jean-Claude MIGNON and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

While the causes of the outbreak of war between Georgia and Russia on 8 August are numerous and the responsibility is a shared one, we sadly acknowledge that this unhappy course of events marks a geopolitical turning point with worldwide ramifications.

The mechanisms of a new war bringing bloodshed to Europe and the world are now being put in place.

Despite a ceasefire agreement and signs of easing tensions, Russia chose, on 26 August, to recognise the independence of Georgia's breakaway republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in defiance of the principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity recognised by international law.

Concerned over the terrible consequences of such a situation for peace in Europe and in the world, we call for a firmer response to a policy based on force and provocation. The risk of uncontrolled chain reactions and fears of the existence of a broader-reaching strategy than the one operated in the Caucasus are a grave threat to international security.

While we understand the bitterness arising from the diminishing of Russia's power at the beginning of the 1990s, we nevertheless deplore the fact that the resentment felt by some fuels purely belligerent and destructive values. Russia is a great country, which will secure all the more recognition of its power through respect for the principles of international law.

Consequently, we see it as our duty to support the decisions seeking to secure the application of the standards of international law and force a withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia.

We welcome the action taken by President Nicolas Sarkozy who, on behalf of the European Union, is striving to find a political settlement to this conflict.

We welcome the action taken by Lluís Maria de Puig, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), for his numerous initiatives aimed at enabling the PACE to contribute to a return of peace.

While the conflict in the Caucasus fully demonstrates the relevance of ever more extensive European construction, it is for the Council of Europe, a key player in that construction, to adopt a stance in line with its principles and values.

Since Russia and Georgia are both Council of Europe member states, it is logical that the Organisation acts as a mediator between the two parties. However, the Council has to consider the situation in the light of its values and review the place of Georgia and even more so of the Russian Federation within the institution.



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We note that political developments in Russia have prompted that country to deploy means that have nevertheless been barred by the Council of Europe.

Signed (see overleaf)

*Signed*¹:

MIGNON Jean-Claude, France, EPP/CD
ADAM Ulrich, Germany
BADRÉ Denis, France, ALDE
BÉTEILLE Laurent, France, EPP/CD
COLOMBIER Georges, France, EPP/CD
CUBREACOV Vlad, Republic of Moldova
DEITTERT Hubert, Germany
DUCARME Daniel, Belgium
EYMER Anke, Germany
FISCHER Axel E., Germany
GARDETTO Jean-Charles, Monaco, EPP/CD
GROSSKOST Arlette, France, EPP/CD
HÖRSTER Joachim, Germany, EPP/CD
LINTNER Eduard, Germany
MARQUET Bernard, Monaco, ALDE
PEIRO Germinal, France
REISS Frédéric, France, EPP/CD
SCHNEIDER André, France, EPP/CD

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party