



***Women all over Europe call for peace and justice  
and call for a halt to militarisation***

August 2008

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) expresses its great concern about the suffering and damage caused to the civilian population, including women, children and elderly, in the recent hostilities in Georgia and welcomes the ceasefire agreement negotiated by the EU.

The EWL strongly opposes militarism and war, and acknowledges that the disastrous impact of war and conflict has a disproportionate effect on women and girls who often face increased gender-based violence during and after armed conflicts. Militarism not only includes armed conflict but also supports such conflicts and of course encourages even greater financial support for the weapons industry. The EWL calls for dialogue between the involved parties in the conflict in Georgia, and for an immediate cessation of the conflict and all its violence as soon as possible.

**THE APPEAL**

We urge the EU, Members States and other parties involved in the conflict not to resort to the use of armed force, but to explore all possible mediation initiatives to seek a solution, involving women, as major stake-holders in society, in all peace negotiations and in post-conflict peace-building and to respect UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. EWL urges the European Union to improve the understanding on Women in Armed Conflicts issues and to develop a strategy and an action plan with reference to UNSCR 1325.

During the current state of war between Georgia and Russia we call on the EU and its Member states, and on the world community, to:

- Take urgent action to stop violence in this region;
- Arrange urgent and effective humanitarian assistance to the population of all the areas affected by the military actions.
- Encourage and facilitate dialogue among the parties involved, guaranteeing women's participation in all peace negotiations;
- Condemn violent acts towards the civil population in the countries, especially acts of violence against women and children.

The EWL - the largest umbrella organisation of women's associations gathering more than 2000 women's NGOs in Europe-, expresses its solidarity with women and children of these regions suffering from violence and armed conflicts.