

EPP GROUP IN THE OSCE-PA MEETS IN TORONTO, CANADA ♦ WELCOMES APPOINTMENT OF GORAN LENNMARKER AS OSCE SPECIAL ENVOY TO GEORGIA

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Toronto, 19 September 2008

The Group of the European People's Party and like-minded of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe met today to discuss the agenda of the fall meeting of the OSCE-PA and the Georgia crisis in particular.

EPP Group Chairperson **Walburga Habsburg Douglas** (SE, MOD) addressed today over 30 parliamentarians of the EPP family and discussed with them the current political challenges facing the Georgian crisis:

*"I am very concerned with the continuation of the stalemate, following Russia's invasion of Georgia last month. Russia must finally understand that it can no longer bully its small southern neighbor. Therefore, I would like to fully endorse all the statements made on Georgia by EPP President **Wilfried Martens** and I hope that we will soon see some real progress,"* Walburga Habsburg Douglas stressed.

"I am also particularly pleased that the OSCE-PA has decided to appoint Göran Lennmarker (SE, MOD) – a leading figure of the EPP family – as Special Envoy to Georgia. Göran Lennmarker's experience, credibility and wide-ranging support will have a positive impact on Georgia's path to normalization," the Chairperson added.

Moreover, EPP Group Vice-Chairman Senator **Consiglio Di Nino** (CA, CON) gave a briefing in the EPP meeting on the current stage of the election campaign of the Conservative Party of Canada. Conservative Prime Minister **Stephen Harper** is seeking re-election on the 14th of October.

Finally, the EPP Group in the OSCE-PA adopted a proposed set of "Rules of Procedure." The adopted Rules will now allow the EPP Group to function in a more formalized and structured manner.

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