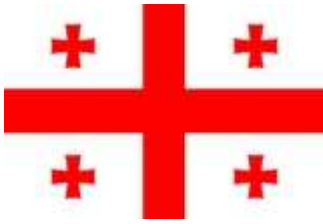


## GEORGIA: EPP PARTY AND EPP-ED GROUP CONGRATULATE UNM FOR THE IMPRESSIVE ELECTION RESULT

23-05-2008



**Wilfried Martens**, the President of the largest translational party of Europe, and **Joseph Daul**, the Chairman of the largest political group in the European Parliament, have today congratulated the Georgian President **Mikheil Saakashvili** and his party for winning the parliamentary elections of 21 May.

*"We are impressed by the engagement of Georgian people to build democracy in Georgia and we congratulate United National Movement for their election victory. The UNM offered the positive programme to the voters. We hope that in next parliamentary term the opposition will play a constructive role focusing on political issues. The dialog between the Government and the opposition is essential for Georgia's democracy and therefore we welcome the pledge of the President Saakashvili not to pass any constitutional changes without the consent of the opposition parties"* said EPP President Wilfried Martens and EPP-ED Group Chairman Joseph Daul.

**Corien Wortmann-Kool** MEP, the Vice-President of the European People's Party, joined the team of the international observers to monitor the parliamentary elections. *"The voters had the opportunity to choose their representatives from variety of political parties. The overall conduct of the elections meant improvement from January's presidential elections, although still severe shortcomings were identified. I call on the Central Election Commission and the authorities to deal with the complaints in a transparent manner and to work on further improvement so the trust and confidence in the electoral process can increase further."* said Corien Wortmann-Kool MEP.

**Arpad Duka Zolyomi** MEP, the Vice-Chair of the EP's South Caucasus Delegation, added: *"Parliamentary elections were another test for Georgian young democracy. But from the long term perspective, the peaceful solution regarding Abkhazia and South Ossetia must be found. The electoral campaign was overshadowed by the recent incidents. European Union should play active role in conflict settlement in its vicinity. Georgia is part of the ENP and therefore we feel more responsible for its development. Therefore I am generally happy with the signs of improvement since the January elections."*

The EPP-ED Group was represented by 3 MEPs. Arpad Duka Zolyomi MEP and **Jaroslav Zverina** MEP were deployed in Batumi, while Corien Wortmann Kool MEP and **Marek Hannibal**, the Group's advisor, were monitoring the polling stations around Mtskheta.

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