



, 10.12.2008

## 60th Anniversary Universal Declaration of Human Rights



On the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008, Human Rights Day, the Spokespersons of the European Green Party have said that there is no cause for complacency regarding the human rights situation within the EU itself and that EU Member States and institutions must also do much more to defend human rights in their dealings with countries outside the EU.

**EGP Co-Spokesperson Ulrike Lunacek** said: "While there is no doubt that in many ways the human rights situation in the EU has improved in recent years, there are numerous examples of a deterioration in this domain and we Greens will continue to carefully scrutinise both EU member states and institutions so that the human rights of all citizens and residents of the EU are respected in practice. Particular areas of concern to us and to many human rights defenders in the EU include the treatment of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants in many parts of the EU, the

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discrimination and prejudice suffered by many members of the Roma minority in Italy and other EU member states and the worrying trend in many member states of increased government surveillance of citizens' activities in the name of maintaining security."

**EGP Co-Spokesperson Philippe Lamberts** continued: "The EU likes to see itself as a champion of human rights but in its dealings with both neighbouring states and countries in other continents, it too often puts short term economic interests ahead of protecting the human rights of the citizens of those countries. The most blatant example of this attitude can be seen in the EU's often inconsistent attitude towards increasingly authoritarian and anti-democratic tendencies in the Russian government but there are many other instances where either member states or EU institutions should speak out much more forcefully against oppression of human rights. We European Greens will not cease to work with those courageous individuals and organisations who stand up for democratic and human rights wherever they are threatened so that the universal nature of human rights is respected in reality and not just as an aspiration."

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