

# Press Release

## Parliamentary Assembly Communication Unit

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## **PACE President concerned about the conflict between Georgia and Russia**

Strasbourg, 09.08.2008 - Lluís Maria de Puig, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), has expressed deep concern about the large-scale military operations taking place between two Council of Europe member states, Georgia and Russia.

According to Mr de Puig, the declaration of a state of war in Georgia unfortunately marks a new step in the current conflict in South Ossetia. He deplored the large numbers of casualties that had resulted from the recent clashes and expressed anxiety about Russian military action which far exceeded Russia's responsibilities under its peacekeeping mandate.

"When they joined the Council of Europe, Georgia and Russia pledged to achieve a political and non-violent resolution of the conflict in South Ossetia. The very serious events of the past few hours represent a flagrant violation of those commitments. And the risk of the conflict spreading to other parts of Georgia cannot be excluded", he added.

He reiterated his call for an immediate cessation of all violence and a return to political dialogue. He particularly appealed to Russia to halt all activity which fell outside its mandate in South Ossetia.

He also said that "the Parliamentary Assembly, which respects international rules and principles, including that of territorial integrity, is willing to help the parties to achieve a peaceful settlement of this conflict".

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.

President: Lluís Maria de Puig (Spain, SOC) ; Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political Groups: EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); SOC (Socialist Group); EDG (European Democratic Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).