News | 17.11.2011

Geneva Arms Conference

European Parliament strongly warns of the relaxation of Cluster Munitions Ban

The European Parliament today considered the EU's role in relation to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and voted for a resolution against any watering down to ban these weapons. Commenting on the vote, **Ulrike Lunacek**, Foreign Affairs Spokesperson of the Greens/EFA said:

With great unity, the European Parliament has today reconfirmed its position against this terrible threat to humans in war and crisis areas. Thousands of victims continue to be affected by cluster munitions to this day: almost exclusively civilians and in particular many children who frequently confuse the bomblets with balls and toys.

This resolution sent a clear message to the participants of the Fourth Review Conference in Geneva. At the moment, a protocol supported by the US, China and Russia is under negotiation, which would legalise the majority of existing cluster bombs as well as their utilisation. Based on an initiative of the Greens/EFA, the European Parliament has adopted a resolution, which declares that the planned protocol is incompatible with the commitments of CCM. In addition, the European Parliament criticises the request to turn back a standard of international humanitarian law, created by the CCM.

With the resolution adopted today, we particularly ask the 22 EU-Member States, which are already members of the CCM, to campaign for the annulment of the planned protocol at the UN-negotiations. According to the CCM, these 22 Member States are obliged to do so. Beyond that, we as EU parliamentarians welcome the strong support of High Representative Catherine Ashton for this cause and urge her to use all of her powers to advocate that the European Union as such joins the CCM. Through the adoption of the resolution today, the European Parliament makes clear that any relaxation of the Cluster Munitions Ban is politically, morally and also legally unacceptable.

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