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Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Karl Von Wogau, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence, call for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Georgia and the sending of a strong ESDP mission to the region.

"We are deeply distressed by the violence of the conflict which has broken out in Georgia. The crisis cannot be resolved by military means. Its escalation is in nobody's interest and risks destabilising the entire region.

Our position is clear. Both sides should refrain from further hostilities. We therefore welcome the fact that Georgia has endorsed the EU proposal for an immediate ceasefire and for the cessation of violence. At the same time we are dismayed at what we consider a de-facto invasion of the Georgian territory by Russian troops. What is happening on the ground goes well beyond mere deterrence.

The Council, meeting tomorrow, must take resolute action to stop this dangerous conflict. The EU should actively mediate between the two sides and help them reach a peaceful solution.

This solution involves the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgian territory and the suspension of the bombing, which is causing great suffering to the civilian population. It also involves a settlement which is sustainable and respectful of the territorial integrity of Georgia.

Finally the Council should consider sending a peacekeeping mission to the region to ensure stability and to guarantee the protection of the civilian population."

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On Wednesday 20 August, the Committee on Foreign Affairs will be holding, together with its Subcommittee on Security and Defence and the Delegation for relations with South Caucasus, an extraordinary meeting in order to discuss the situation in the region.