

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5069/08  
by Adrian Severin (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject: European Union political support for Azerbaijan in the context of the crisis in Georgia

In the speech she gave on 1 September 2008 in the European Parliament following the extraordinary European Council meeting convened to address the situation in Georgia, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner made a series of statements on the need to consolidate the Eastern Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy in the present context. With reference to those policies, the Commissioner stated that the EU is committed to offering its support to countries such as Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova as regards their territorial integrity and sovereignty, saying that: 'Our commitment in June to develop the Eastern Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy demonstrates the EU's legitimate interests in the region. These policies underline that we will not accept new dividing lines in Europe, and that partners like Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova can count on our support for their territorial integrity and sovereignty. We are ready to accelerate and deepen our work on the new Eastern partnership in order to submit our proposal as soon as possible'.

The European Union is in principle committed, through its policies, to all the countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (including the new Eastern Partnership) and the Black Sea Synergy, so that coherent and consistent EU action of this kind must address all the countries in the region.

Against this background:

Can the Commission clarify whether, in the context of the situation in Georgia, the omission of Azerbaijan from the speech by Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner quoted from above can be explained by the fact that it considers Azerbaijan a less-threatened country or whether this reflects a change in its position in the context of its policies in the region?

Can the Commission make clear if the European Union is prepared and willing to restate its support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan?

Can the Commission say whether, under the given circumstances, it considers it appropriate and it is ready to prepare a plan to advance its relations and to step up its cooperation with Azerbaijan in such a way as to consolidate the capacity of that country to restore and consolidate its territorial integrity, to defend its sovereignty, to avoid any involvement in regional crises and to play a stabilising role in the South Caucasus and the Caspian Sea area?