



## CHECHNYA PEACE FORUM

PRESS RELEASE

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### **SPOTLIGHT ON RUSSIA**

Following the success of the *Spotlight on Russia* conference, hosted by the Chechnya Peace Forum and the Foreign Policy Centre in London yesterday, Director of the Chechnya Peace Forum, Ivar Amundsen will submit a resolution to the European Council and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Commenting today Ivar Amundsen, Director of the Chechnya Peace Forum said:

**“The Chechnya Peace Forum calls on Europe and the international community to put freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law at the heart of it’s dealings with Russia.**

**“We call on the European Council and the OSCE to strongly implore Russia to: ensure the defence of human rights and the rule of law; allow the voice of political opponents to be heard not suffocated; permit unrestricted access of humanitarian organisations; to end torture and suffering in Chechnya.**

**“As the new President of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev has the opportunity to finally bring security, freedom, peace and respect for human rights to the people of Chechnya. We call on him to hold the first free and fair elections in more than a decade under the close scrutiny of independent observers.**

**“I would like to thank all our extremely eminent speakers who contributed to *Spotlight on Russia*, creating a thought provoking and stimulating event, with fantastic insight into Russia – today and tomorrow.”**

**Ends**

Notes to editors:

1. Speakers at Spotlight in Russia included: Boris Nemtsov, Former Deputy Prime Minister of Russia 1997-1999; Ed Lucas, Central and Eastern Europe correspondent for *The Economist*; Nina Khrushcheva, Professor of International Affairs, The New School, New York; Andrei Piontkovsky, Hudson Institute; Peter Tatchell, Human Rights Campaigner;

Marina Litvinenko, Author; Natalia Novozhilova, Journalist and Human Rights Campaigner; Bill Bowring, Chair International Steering Committee, European Human Rights Advocacy Centre; Tony Wood, Author of *Chechnya: the Case for Independence*; John Russell, Professor in Russian Studies at the University of Bradford and Author of *Chechnya: Russia's "War on terror"*; Akhmed Zakaev, Prime Minister of the resistance Government of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria; David Satter, Hudson Institute; Philip Hanson, Professor of the Political Economy of Russia and Eastern Europe & Associate Fellow Chatham House Russia and Eurasia Programme; Vytautas Landsbergis MEP, President of Lithuania 1990-92; Mark Pritchard MP, Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Russia; David Clark, Chair of the Russia Foundation

2. On May 7th 2008 *The Guardian* newspaper in the UK published a letter calling for the new President of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev to finally bring security, freedom, peace and respect for human rights to the people of Chechnya. Signatories included Andrew Motion, Anthony Giddens, Professor A. C. Grayling, John le Carre, Benjamin Zephaniah, Ken Loach, Peter Tatchell, Helena Kennedy, Peter Bottomley MP, Michael Moore MP, Danny Alexander MP, Chris Bryant MP. A copy of the letter can be seen at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/may/07/russia.chechnya>.