

FROM:Mark Fodor
Executive Director
CEE Bankwatch Network
Na Rozcesti 6, 190 00
Prague, Czech Republic**TO:**José Manuel Barroso
President of the European
Commission
1049 Brussels, Belgium**Bulgaria:**Centre for Environmental
Information and Education
(CEIE)
For the Earth**Czech Republic:**Centrum pro dopravu a
energetiku (CDE)
Hnutí Duha**Estonia:**

Estonian Green Movement-FoE

Georgia:

Green Alternative

Hungary:National Society of
Conservationists - Friends of
the Earth Hungary (MTVSZ)**Lithuania:**

Atgaja

Macedonia:

Eko-svest

Poland:Polish Green Network (PGN)
Institute of Environmental
Economics (IEE)**Serbia:**Center for Ecology and
Sustainable Development
(CEKOR)**Slovakia:**Friends of the Earth - Center
for Environmental Public
Advocacy (FoE-CEPA)**Ukraine:**National Ecological Centre of
Ukraine (NECU)CEE Bankwatch Network's
mission is to prevent
environmentally and socially
harmful impacts of
international development
finance, and to promote
alternative solutions and
public participation.**RE: Community Guarantee for M10 motorway project in Russia**

Prague, 2 August 2010

Dear Mr President,

I am writing you regarding the recent escalation in violence at Khimki Forest near Moscow, Russia which is connected to the construction of the M10 motorway. This project is being considered for financing by the European Investment Bank under the Community Guarantee.

In the past few weeks we have witnessed conflicts between peaceful demonstrators and the construction crews that were felling forest trees without the necessary permits. On the morning of July 22, members of civil society were attacked by scores of unidentified assailants wearing masks and white tee shirts. While protestors called the police to intervene, upon their arrival to the site the police chose instead not to interfere and eventually arrested local activists. Several of the activists were brutally beaten and injured.

A week earlier forest defenders were arrested in relation to riots in front of the Khimki municipality in that they were neither organising, nor participating in. The arrested activists are being held on charges of starting a fire in the forest at a time when it was prohibited to do so – they did not do so. Currently the majority of the arrested activists are still waiting for court hearings.

The attacks on these protestors follow a blockade by the Movement to Defend Khimki Forest earlier this month, in response to the illegal felling of trees in the forest. There are estimates that nearly seven hectares have already been destroyed.

In light of these developments, I strongly believe that the European Investment Bank should immediately drop consideration for this project and that European Commission should not grant a Community Guarantee. Participation of the EU's institutions in such project will negatively influence their reputation and would legitimise the human rights violation we are now witnessing in Khimki.

Sincerely,



Mark Fodor

cc:

1. **Giorgio Casoni, Head of Unit, Coordination with the EIB group, DG ECFIN** - Giorgio.Chiarion-Casoni@ec.europa.eu
2. **Hilde Hardeman, Head of Unit, Russia and Northern Dimension policy, DG Relex** - Hilde.Hardeman@ec.europa.eu