

**DR. CAROLINE LUCAS**

**Green Party Member of the European Parliament  
for the South East of England**

11<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment  
Loukis Akritas Ave.,  
1411 Lefkosia (Nicosia)

Dear sir/madam

As Vice President of the European Parliament's Animal Welfare Intergroup, I would like to draw your attention to the situation of an animal welfare group in Paphos, Cyprus. Paphiakos ccP was formed around ten years ago and has become established as a refuge for stray, abandoned and sick animals - a vital necessity for Cyprus, where previously no such care existed.

However, Paphiakos is being forced to relocate by June 2005, apparently because the land on which the sanctuary is located is needed for redevelopment, despite being in an area already heavily commercialised area. Although seventeen different sites have been offered as alternatives, all of which are acceptable, no council will grant permission to re-site the animals. I understand that your government has been very unsympathetic to this problem, implying either that the animals should be sold (unworkable since they are strays anyway), or that they be set loose, with obvious consequences. Meanwhile, unless she meets the deadline of June 2005, Christine Paphiakos (as the founder of the shelter) faces imprisonment and the confiscation of her property.

Twenty years ago, there was virtually no animal welfare in Cyprus, and the need was dire. Thanks to the tireless and selfless efforts of people in voluntary initiatives such as Paphiakos, there is a noticeable improvement and hope for the future. Paphiakos run an excellent programme of rehoming, neutering, and generally providing shelter for literally thousands of animals every year.

I am sure that you would not like to see this programme disappear, and these people punished instead of rewarded. In my capacity with the aforementioned Intergroup, I feel it is my duty to express my concern surrounding this issue; and I urge you to take positive action on it.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Caroline Lucas MEP