PRESS STATEMENT

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European Summit: Children’s NGOs welcome adopted “Reform Treaty”

The European Children’s Network (EURONET), representing children’s rights NGOs from across Europe, welcomes the adoption of the Reform Treaty on 19 October by European leaders in Lisbon.

“EU leaders have finally recognised that children are European citizens too” said Mieke Schuurman, EURONET Secretary General on the adoption of the Reform Treaty, which includes the protection of children’s rights in the internal and external objectives of the European Union. “The new Treaty will pave the way for children’s rights and needs to be fully taken into account across EU policy-making – something which is long overdue”.

Euronet is also pleased that the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which includes children’s rights, is made binding by the new Treaty. However it is concerned that opt-outs for the UK and Poland will weaken protection for children.

“Many areas of EU policy making have an impact on children” noted Kathleen Spencer Chapman, President of EURONET. "Childrens’ NGOs have long been highlighting the need for all EU actions to be in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The new Treaty provides a strong basis for this - the challenge now is for EU leaders to make sure it happens”.

The Reform Treaty will come into force only after ratification by all 27 Member States. EURONET calls on EU institutions and Member States to make children’s rights a reality with clear political commitment and sufficient human and financial resources.

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Note to editors:
The European Children’s Network (EURONET) is a coalition of networks and organisations campaigning at European level for the interests and rights of children. Its activities include policy development research, and projects involving children and young people directly.

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Article 3, The Union’s objectives

3. […] It shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child. […]

5. In its relations with the wider world, the Union should uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to […] the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter.