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Important communication from the European Children's Network (EURONET)

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Dear friends, colleagues and supporters,

As you are aware, the European Children's Network (EURONET) has been working since the mid-1990s to promote children's rights in European Union decision-making. EURONET was initially formed by a small group of organisations with the objective of securing the inclusion of children's rights in the EU Treaties. Due to the hard work of its members and Secretariat, this was achieved in the draft Constitutional Treaty, and then the draft Lisbon Treaty, which is currently awaiting ratification by EU Member States.

EURONET has also helped ensure a children's rights article in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights, and secured the commitment of the European Commission to developing a European Strategy on the Rights of the Child, which we expect to come to fruition under the next European Commission. Overall, EURONET has played a key role in bringing about greater visibility for children's rights in EU policy-making, which has already had an impact in many policy areas and will, we hope, be felt far into the future.

The current economic climate has made things more uncertain for many of EURONET's member organisations. Despite the ongoing commitment of members to pursuing children's rights at EU level, it has in this context become unsustainable to support the requirements of a legally constituted organisation, and to do justice through such a structure to the need for input on children's rights in EU policy making.

In May 2009 EURONET members have therefore decided to disband the EURONET association as a legal entity; our current Manager, Elizabeth Niland, will remain in the office only until the end of July 2009. However many member organisations will continue to cooperate informally to contribute expertise on children's rights in EU policy making, and EURONET's website will be retained as an archive for all to use. We believe it is imperative that EURONET's work up to present be built on, that the momentum is maintained towards greater integration of children's rights in EU policy making, and towards children and young people having a greater say in European debates and decisions.

EURONET is extremely grateful for the support of its many friends and partners over the years, including those in EU institutions, the Council of Europe, the NGO community, UNICEF and many others. Without these partners EURONET's work would not have been possible. We hope that the strength of these partnerships can be harnessed to make further steps forward for children's rights on a European level. We would also like to pay tribute to EURONET's staff who have worked tirelessly on behalf of the network.

We hope that this development, as well as marking an ending, will open new opportunities and new ways of working together for children's rights.



Helmut Sax, Acting President of Euronet