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PRESS RELEASE

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PROMISING RESOLUTION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: TOWARDS A STRUCTURED DIALOGUE WITH THE CIVIL SOCIETY

The European Parliament has adopted on 13 January by a large majority the report of the socialist MEP Genowefa Grabowska¹, calling for a structured civil dialogue between European institutions and civil society, as outlined within article 11 of the consolidated EU Treaty.

This report aims to reinforce the consultation procedure and to get citizens closer to the policy making, and recommends the adoption of an inter-institutional agreement on the appointment of “representative” civil society organizations eligible to dialogue with the European institutions. The European Parliament also asks the Commission to review the issue of the European association “so that European civil society organisations can fall back on a shared legal basis”.

The European Civic Forum, a transnational network of associations and NGOs involved in matters relating to education to citizenship, welcomes the adoption of this report on the eve of the European elections, as an important step forward in the recognition of the role of NGOs within the democratic functioning of our societies.

Since its creation, the European Civic Forum has been supporting the emergence of more participatory forms of European governance complementary to the representative democracy and the European Parliament’s resolution is stimulating for the pursuit of this action.

The European elections are an opportunity for the NGOs networks across Europe to express their main concerns and requests and take a stand before future candidates. In this purpose, the **European Civic Forum organizes together with several European platforms and networks** sharing the same will to make civil society organizations participate at each stage of the European policy making and implementation a **“Civil Society Day” on 14 April 2009 in the European Economic and Social Committee’s hemicycle in Brussels.**

Representatives of the political parties and of the European Commission will be invited to participate in and debate on a common manifesto for the setting up of a European civil dialogue. The European Parliament’s resolution shows that this dialogue might soon become effective.

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¹ Report on the perspectives for developing civil dialogue under the Treaty of Lisbon, 4 December 2008.