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Committee of European Green Party publishes position paper on EU reform treaty **Lisbon Treaty**

The Committee of the European Green Party has published its position paper on the EU Reform Treaty, also known as the Lisbon Treaty. In this paper, the EGP Committee outlines what it sees as the positive and negative aspects of the treaty, arguing that despite several reservations that the EGP has about the treaty, it does allow the EU to put an end to 6 years of constitutional wrangling, increase democracy and concentrate on the serious social, economic and environmental challenges currently facing the EU and so should be supported by European Greens. The Reform Treaty is being signed by EU heads of state and government at a ceremony in Lisbon on Thursday 13th December.

EGP Co-Spokesperson Philippe Lamberts said : " This position paper presents the EGP Committee's evaluation of the Lisbon treaty. Although we Greens would have wanted a much more ambitious and courageous treaty than the one that is proposed, it does contain a number of key positive reforms and should be able to make progress in important areas. In particular, we welcome the greater powers given both to the European Parliament and national parliaments, the accordance of legal personality to the EU and the attempt to better involve citizens in the EU's decision-making process, including the introduction of a "Citizens Initiative" through which citizens can propose legislation by collecting one million signatures for a petition. We are also very pleased that the Charter of Fundamental rights is to become legally binding but we deplore the decision to allow national opt-outs from the Charter, namely in the case of the United Kingdom and Poland. On the negative side, we very much regret that the treaty was not the result of a democratic and transparent process and that the term "constitutional treaty" has been removed."

EGP Co-Spokesperson Ulrike Lunacek continued: "It is crucially important that this treaty is not seen as the solution to all the EU's problems but rather as just one part of a much wider and more ambitious process of renewal of the EU so that the EU can win back the trust of its citizens and meet the challenges it is facing, including climate



change and the effects of globalisation. In terms of how the treaty should be ratified, our position has always been that the most democratic way of ratifying treaties like this (and the Previous Constitutional Treaty) would be through a Europe-wide referendum. Unfortunately this option was rejected. We are not in favour of national referenda as we think citizens of one or two member states should not be allowed to block constitutional progress for all other EU citizens. We are however in favour of a Europe-wide consultation process and urge national and governments and parliaments to hold citizens' fora at national and regional levels in order to enter into a real dialogue with citizens. The Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament provided a good example of how this would work by calling for a "Citizens' Agora" in Brussels in November 2007 , an event at which hundreds of representatives of civil society organisations debated the Lisbon Treaty and the future of Europe. In countries where a referendum will be held (at this stage it seems that this will only be Ireland), we would recommend that Greens vote in favour of the Treaty."

EGP Committee position on the Lisbon Treaty

(http://www.europeangreens.org/cms/default/dokbin/211/211081.egp_committee_position_on_the
