

## **OPEN LETTER - PRESS RELEASE**

To the  
Heads of the European States

Bern/Berlin, May 19, 2009

### **2010 – European Year Against Poverty and Social Exclusion**

#### **No Child Poverty in Europe! European Network of Single Parent Families demands action against child poverty in single parent families**

Dear Madam/Sir,

Child poverty in Europe has reached a dramatic level. Scientific data shows that 19 percent of the children in single parent families are poor, moreover, the risk of poverty of single parent families lies at 35 percent.

The European Union has declared that one of its main goals is the fight against poverty and social exclusion. Yet there are no formal policies in place to reduce the enormous risk of poverty for children in single parent families.

The European Network of Single Parent Families (ENoS\*) has therefore launched the campaign „No Child Poverty in Europe!“ during its annual meeting on 16 May 2009 in Bern, Switzerland:

- ENoS calls upon all European countries to be proactive in the 2010 European Year Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, with specific activity against the reasons for child poverty in single parent families.
- The 2010 European Year has a budget of at least 26 millions Euros. ENoS demands that a guaranteed part of this budget be spent on specific programmes to fight the poverty in single parent families.

\*ENoS: Asociación de Madres Solteras “Isadora Duncan”, Spain ▪ Federació Catalana de Famílies Monoparentals, Spain ▪ Fédération Syndicale des Familles Monoparentales, France ▪ Österreichische Plattform für Alleinerziehende, Austria ▪ Schweizerischer Verband alleinerziehender Mütter und Väter, Switzerland ▪ Sveriges Makalösa Föräldrar, Sweden ▪ Südtiroler Plattform für Alleinerziehende, Italy ▪ Verband alleinerziehender Mütter und Väter, Bundesverband e.V., Germany

The main reasons for child poverty in single parent families are

- Discrimination against single parents, especially mothers, in opportunities for employment: There must be policies that enable single parents to combine properly remunerated work with their childcaring responsibilities.
- Insufficient levels of support from non-resident parents for their children: There need to be policies that result in more effective enforcement of child support payments by non-resident parents.
- Lack of state support for the costs of raising children: Governments must provide sufficient support with the costs of children to ensure that all children can grow up free from poverty.

Children are the future, and the children who live in 14 million single parent families across Europe should be at the forefront of activities during the 2010 Year.

Sincerely



Edith Schwab  
ENoS President

## **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

### Article 27

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.
3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.
4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents or other persons having financial responsibility for the child, both within the State Party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having financial responsibility for the child lives in a State different from that of the child, States Parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other appropriate arrangements.

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