

## PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, March 19<sup>th</sup> 2014

### Round Table on "Political Foundations in Development Cooperation" 18th March 2014

The launch of the Profile Paper "Political Foundations: Development Cooperation between State and Society", was the topic of a round table in the Austrian Parliament on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2014. The event was jointly organised by AWEPA (European Parliamentarians with Africa), Parlamentarischer NordSüdDialog, IUFE (Institut für Umwelt, Friede, Entwicklung) and the ENoP Working Group "Development Assistance". Petra Bayr, Member of the Austrian Parliament and Chairwoman of AWEPA opened the roundtable. She underlined the importance of bringing development policy into the forefront of national parliaments, as well as ensuring policy coherence for development.

Sidonie Wetzig, chair of the ENoP Working Group, summarized key statements of the publication, which argues that Political Foundations can fill the gaps between public policies, globalized markets and civil society. They offer services aimed at bridging states, public and private spheres. Globalisation and modern communication have rendered the world more integrated and interdependent and the role of citizens in this process has increased. Nevertheless, effective development cooperation still needs to adjust to the fact that governmental structures often do not keep up with new global challenges.

#### ENoP – EUROPEAN NETWORK OF POLITICAL FOUNDATIONS

#### INDEPENDENT ACTORS IN DEMOCRACY PROMOTION, DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND POLITICAL DIALOGUE

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#### The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".

Political Foundations therefore play a crucial role in shaping the political responses to economic, social and ecological challenges. In order to better illustrate their work in development cooperation, ENoP Working Group members presented at the roundtable best practice examples of projects and activities they implemented on the ground.

The meeting, chaired by Johannes Steiner, Executive Director of the Vienna Institute for Environment, Peace and Development, concluded with an open discussion among the participants on how to improve the involvement of national politicians in development issues. Austrian Parliamentarians, representatives from civil society organisations and state agencies took part in the roundtable.

Consisting of 69 member organisations, based in 25 EU member states from 6 party families, ENoP brings political pluralism that ensures the support of democratisation in a wide range. The European Commission co-funds the ENoP project: "Building a bridge towards socio-political stakeholders for an effective EU development assistance – enhanced dialogue with and within the European Network of Political Foundations".

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