



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **MEPs: "We need to put human dignity on the forefront of EU policy making"**

**In times when protection of human dignity is under threat on many legislative fronts, not only in the EU, but also worldwide, Members of the European Parliament, from different political groups and affiliations, have acted to restore the recognition of human dignity by re-launching the cross-party Working Group on Human Dignity. The group, which was established back in 2009 by Prof. Dr. Hans-Gert Pöttering MEP, then President of the European Parliament, gathers MEPs who believe that it is of key importance to maintain the original vision of EU's founding fathers, by putting human dignity on the forefront of EU policy making.**

*"The infinite dignity of every human being is routinely denied across all stages of life, from conception until natural death. Therefore, the concept of human dignity must be further explored, in order to acquire a deeper understanding of the many cultural aspects which play a role in it, such as for example recognizing the contribution of Europe's Christian heritage"* affirm the MEPs, chaired by **Mr Bastiaan Belder MEP (ECR)** and a cross-party board of vice-chairs composed by **Mr Alojz Peterle MEP (EPP)**, **Mr Luigi Morgano MEP (S&D)**, **Ms Marian Harkin MEP (ALDE)**, **Ms Daniela Aiuto MEP (EFDD)** and **Ms Diane Dodds MEP (NI)**.

*"This ongoing need, led to the launch of the first European Parliaments' Working Group on Human Dignity, already back in March 2009"* reminded the MEPs.

Indeed, the very first article of the 'Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union' states that "Human Dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected" and Article 2 states that "Everyone has the right to life". Unfortunately, *"these are not always the driving principles in the drafting of European legislation"* expressed the MEPs.

*"The Working Group will act as a focal point for legislative and political action in the European Parliament in order to improve political coordination among likeminded Members, and serve as a catalyst for changing the way policy makers perceive human dignity."* said the MEPs.

*"Topics such as the protection of early life and the dignity of the unborn will be an important concern for our endeavours, with the aim to support, under a cross party approach, many of the initiatives already active in the European Parliament, hoping to effectively translate our common vision to policy"* stressed the MEPs.

*"Our objective is to emphasize that the universal recognition of human dignity stands above all differences and it is essential to the development of the human being and the prosperity of our society, equally concerning the future of all European citizens"* concluded the MEPs.

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**Principles of the Working Group on Human Dignity:** The 'Universal Declaration of Human Dignity', which fully takes into account the 'Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union', remains the foundation of the newly relaunched Working Group. Membership for the Working Group is open to all Members of the European Parliament, who sign the *Universal Declaration of Human Dignity*.

Previously, the WG was chaired by **Mr Gay Mitchel MEP (EPP)**, together with **Mr Nirj Deva MEP (ECR)**.