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Black Friday for Europe

Irish No to Lisbon treaty

Commenting on the result of the EU treaty referendum in Ireland, **Monica Frassoni** and **Daniel Cohn-Bendit**, Co-Presidents of the Greens/EFA group in the European parliament today said:

"The Irish No has once again demonstrated that national referenda are not an adequate instrument to decide European questions. Manipulated and false information on the nature of the treaty and the deliberately inaccessible treaty text made a constructive debate on the true issues impossible.

More than half the Irish decided not to turn out and the majority of those that did voted no. They have the democratic right to do so but it is not truly democratic that less than a million people can decide the fate of almost half a billion Europeans.

The ratification process should go on and at the end we should take stock. We now need an initiative for those countries and political and social forces who are convinced that the EU must be capable of efficient decision-making and must become more democratic and more cohesive. The European parliament has to play a major part in this initiative and is the right place to discuss and decide the way forward.

We cannot go on with the Nice Treaty's EU. EU member states will have to decide if they want to go for a more integrated Europe or if they opt to be members of little more than a free trade area.

We reiterate that we need a short Constitution focussing on selected points that are understandable and relevant to citizens, for example the Charter of fundamental rights, more democratic decision making and more instruments for positive policies. This new initiative should be put to European citizens in a Europe-wide referendum on the same day as the European elections.

EU governments with their ambiguity on Europe are among the main culprits of the Irish No, as they managed to kill the soul of the process that started with the

For further information, please contact:

Helmut Weixler
Head of Press Office
The Greens/EFA in the European Parliament
Tel: (Bxl) +32 2 2844683

Press release

The Greens | EFA
in the European Parliament



European convention in 2003."

Fax: 0032 2 2844944

Mobile: 0032-475-67 13 40

helmut.weixler@europarl.europa.eu (<mailto:helmut.weixler@europarl.europa.eu>)