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To:
The President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering

Cc:
Margot Wallström, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy
Jan Figel, European Commissioner, for Education, training and youth
Genowefa Grabowska, European Parliament rapporteur on the development of civil dialogue under the Treaty of Lisbon
Jo Leinen, Chair of the Constitutional Affairs Committee of the European Parliament
Gérard Onesta, Vice President of the European Parliament

European Parliament Agora – A first step towards a structured civil dialogue with the European Parliament

13 November 2008

Dear President,

The conference of Presidents of the European Parliament is to decide whether to continue the Agora experience. Mental Health Europe expresses a strong support for the renewal of a structured form of dialogue between Members of the European Parliament and civil society at large.

Given the existing gap between European institutions, and citizens active in associations, as well as the unsatisfactory degree of participation in the European elections, we identify the need for new forms of dialogue aimed to institutionalize citizens' involvement in EU issues and to strengthen civil dialogue around issues of broad common/European interest.

Mental Health Europe therefore calls for the continuation of the Agora.

Yours Sincerely,

Malgorzata Kmita
President

Mary Van Dievel
Director