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PRESS RELEASE

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The honesty of EC designate T. Borg stronger than false assertions

On Tuesday 13 November a 3 hours hearing was held at the European Parliament with the Maltese Commissioner designate Tonio Borg. The hearing was preceded by a misleading campaign against Dr Borg attacking his personal views, albeit the fundamental rights of the EU that foresee freedom of opinion, belief and expression. However, the turnout was a defeat of those false assertions.

Prior to the hearing Antoine Renard, President of the European Federation of Catholic Family Associations, called on the MEPs members of the ENVI, IMCO and AGRI Committees to “**stand up for fundamental rights**”, pointing out that “**Fundamental rights such as freedom of conscience, belief and opinion are put at stake** as the personal values of Mr Borg are depicted as incompatible with the European values. The attempts to blacklist Mr Borg **do not respect the fundamental freedoms** laid down in Art 10 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Furthermore, Mr Renard commented that “**Mr Borg’s personal views are presented as an obstacle to hold an important public office as EU Commissioner. However, the fundamental rights are the core values on which the European Union is founded and apply to all citizens, including European Commissioners.**”

Dr Borg was met with big applause during the hearing as he replied on issues regarding non-discrimination in the areas of family, marriage and abortion raised by several MEPs, questioning Dr Borg on his intention to respect the commitments of the European Union. He underlined **that all Parliamentary questions on these issues have received one reply from the European Commission**: the issues of abortion and the definition of marriage and family **fall exclusively in the national competency of the Member States.**

He “**commits himself to act not as a Maltese Commissioner but as a European Commissioner from Malta**”. He repeatedly expressed his intention to abide to the treaties, thus respecting the Code of Conduct of European Commissioners, which implies that he will not let his personal opinions influence the decisions made as a Commissioner, and respect the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The honesty of Mr Borg was clear to anyone present as the comments of a European citizen, mother of 4 from Belgium, attending the hearing attest: “**Mr Borg appears to me as a mature man, competent and honest. He is a high level profile that is a sure value for everyone’s health in the EU**”. In his concluding remarks Mr Borg himself stated “*I think that it was a proper dialogue. It’s not a question of being smart or clever. It’s a question of being myself. You get what you see. There’s no hidden agenda.*”

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The Federation of Catholic Family Associations, FAFCE, is acknowledged by the Council of Europe as a Non-Governmental Organisation with a participatory status. It represents family interests in the political arena from a catholic perspective, on the basis of the Catholic Church’s Social and Family teaching as well as on the testimony of faith and experimental knowledge of Christians in Church and society.

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