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European Foundation Centre, Council on Foundations release *Principles of Accountability for International Philanthropy*

Outline

The European Foundation Centre (EFC) and the US Council on Foundations (COF) announce today the release of the jointly developed *Principles of Accountability for International Philanthropy*. Voluntary and aspirational, the Principles and accompanying Practices aim to guide and support funders in making better decisions in pursuing their international missions and objectives, and to provide a framework that will encourage and assist more foundations to get involved internationally.

"The joint Principles of Accountability are testimony to a new age that is being ushered in of greater accountability and responsiveness on the part of foundations," said Gerry Salole, Chief Executive of the EFC. "The era of 'trust us, we do good stuff' is rightly drawing to a close, and an era of greater scrutiny and coordinated self-governance is emerging. It is very significant that this sea change is occurring on both sides of the Atlantic at the same time and that the foundation sector at large, through its membership associations, are taking a pivotal first step in a joint response to an increasingly globalised environment in which we all operate."

The Principles are the result of a two-year collaborative effort of a 14-member EFC-COF working group, comprising foundations and corporate donors of varying philanthropic styles, experience, traditions, asset and expenditure bases, programmatic interests and geographic areas of activity. With international philanthropy growing rapidly in both Europe and the US, along with other forms of cross-border cooperation, it was designed in response to donors' search for guidance on how to ensure that their international philanthropy is conducted in an accountable, transparent and responsible manner.

Central to the initiative, which was launched in 2005, was a series of consultations with EFC and COF members; donor associations and networks; international NGOs; grantees and partner organisations in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa, including a workshop with 25 African NGO leaders in South Africa. Commenting on this particular element of the initiative, working group co-chair, Luc Tayart de Borms, Managing Director of the King Baudouin Foundation, commented, "Foundations are not working in 'splendid isolation'. They do a lot of their work through grantees, partners and are in contact with many stakeholders in order to achieve their impact. It was clear from the beginning that the working group had to interact with all of these in order to accurately assess the practices and challenges faced by them when working with foundations. Engaging with these stakeholders through consultations has contributed in an important way to the relevance of the document."

The document encompasses seven concise Principles based on an identified set of core values that foundations should aspire to embrace. They address integrity; understanding; respect; responsiveness; fairness; cooperation and collaboration; and effectiveness. They seek to fill a specific niche and complement activities undertaken in Europe and the United States that deal with broader issues of accountability, effectiveness and good practice. The Principles are a living document that will be reviewed and updated periodically.

More information

Download the Principles of Accountability for International Philanthropy, free of charge from: <http://www.efc.be/4795>. The Principles are also available in hardcopy format, contact international@efc.be.

About the European Foundation Centre

The European Foundation Centre is an independent international association that promotes and underpins the work of foundations and corporate funders active in and with Europe. For more information on the Centre, visit www.efc.be

About the Council on Foundations

The Council on Foundations is a Washington, DC-based non-profit membership association of more than 2,000 grantmaking foundations and corporations, with assets totalling more than \$282 billion. For more information on the Council, visit www.cof.org