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FEANTSA CONFERENCE DELEGATES CALL ON EU TO SET TARGET TO END HOMELESSNESS BY 2030

Friday 15 June 2018 – Over 350 actors from the homeless sector and beyond gathered in Berlin today and called for the European Union to set a target to end homelessness by 2030. Participants from all backgrounds – frontline service providers, local and national policymakers, academics and advocates – united in their support for recognition at the European level of the urgency of the problem.

As signatories to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, each European government has committed itself to end extreme poverty by 2030. Homelessness is at the extreme end of poverty and is currently increasing across almost the entirety of Europe. Although it is possible to perceive such targets as “vague” or “empty,” when accompanied by a realistic strategy and the appropriate funding and political will, actual progress could be made.

Leilani Farha, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to housing, emphasised in her intervention during the morning’s panel discussion the need to shift from “managing” homelessness to “ending” it.

She goes on to say that “homelessness is one of the most pressing issues of our time and marks the failure of governments to implement the right to housing and protect the right to life. Governments must act urgently to prevent and end homelessness by 2030.”

Director of FEANTSA Freek Spinnewijn said that “the European Union has committed itself to ‘leaving no one behind’ and yet many of its social policies, which could have a positive impact on homeless people’s lives, systematically do not reach them. A far greater effort needs to be made to target this vulnerable population and to cater to their specific needs and profiles. Not only does this make sense from a human rights point of view, integrating this previously overlooked group of people has economic and political benefits - especially in a context where Brexit was made possible and Euroscepticism and extremism are gaining



ground.”

The European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, Marianne Thyssen, has made much of wanting “not a cent less for social,” and FEANTSA and the wider homeless sector are ready and willing to advise on how to invest properly in ending homelessness – starting by setting the target to end it by 2030.

For more information, please contact FEANTSA Communications Officer, Emma Nolan: emma.nolan@feantsa.org

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Notes for editors:

1. **FEANTSA** is the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless. It is an umbrella of not-for-profit organisations which participate in or contribute to the fight against homelessness in Europe. It is the only major European network focusing exclusively on homelessness at European level