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## **EIUC ASSEMBLY DECEMBER 2006: NEW BOARD & NEW FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK**

The EIUC Assembly taking place on 1-2 December 2006 marked the closure of the first four years of EIUC's existence. This was a time of intense institution-building and consolidation of existing activities. It was also a time of institutional enlargement, of establishing important strategic partnerships, and of launching a broad range of new, innovative activities. EIUC President Horst Fischer presented on behalf of the outgoing Board a comprehensive report on all accomplishments during the first four years, and indeed this was received by the Assembly delegates as an impressive testimony of fruitful cooperation.

Marking the beginning of a second four-year period, a new Board of Administrators was elected. Aside from Prof. Antonio Papisca (University of Padua), who voluntarily retired from his position in the Board, all serving Board members were re-elected with a strong vote of confidence. In addition, Prof. Kalliope Agapiou-Josephides (University of Cyprus) was elected as new member of the Board and was warmly welcomed in this position by all colleagues. Prof. Horst Fischer was nominated by acclamation for a second mandate as EIUC President.

The Assembly was attended by Dott. Andrea Del Mercato, Head of the Directorate on Economic Development and EC Policies, Municipality of Venice, who read to the representatives of the 39 EIUC universities a message on behalf of the Mayor of Venice, Prof. Massimo Cacciari, complementing EIUC on its achievements and promising continued support by the Municipality.

Another very positive development presented to the Assembly by the EIUC President was the prospect of a new EU regulation ensuring continued funding for EIUC for the entire period of the financial perspective 2007-2013. Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, adopted on 20 December 2006, establishes a financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and

human rights worldwide, and in this context expressly names EIUC as beneficiary. Article 13 of the Regulation specifically envisages: “grants to support operating costs of the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC), in particular for the European Master’s Degree Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation and the EU-UN Fellowship Programme, fully accessible to nationals of third countries, as well as other education, training and research activities promoting human rights and democratisation”.

No other institution (except for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) is earmarked for funding in this document, so clearly EIUC has also been given a strong vote of confidence from the side of the EU institutions and now has a solid base for its continued promotion of human rights and democratisation through education, specialised training, research cooperation, and an expanding range of other activities. The new EIUC Board is committed to rising to this challenge.