Press release

Fair Trade housewarming at the European Parliament

8 October 2014 (Brussels) – The European Parliament Fair Trade Working Group hosted a Fair Trade Breakfast today. Attended in large numbers by renowned and new Members of the European Parliament in support of Fair Trade, this marked a successful start into the new legislative term.

Linda McAvan, Chair of the European Parliament’s Committee on Development and of the Fair Trade Working Group, welcomed the 50 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from all major political groups, officials from Permanent Representations of European Union Member States, as well as Fair Trade movement actors and network representatives. Linda McAvan went on to introduce the new Vice Chairs of this cross-party group of MEPs working together for EU policies in support of Fair Trade: Sirpa Pietikäinen, Judith Sargentini, Charles Goerens and Helmut Scholz.

Amongst the speakers was Bernd Lange, the Chair of the Committee on International Trade in the European Parliament, addressing the crowd about the importance of fairness in international trade. In her keynote speech Nyagoy Nyong’o, Executive Director of Fairtrade Africa presented the work of her organisation for Fairtrade certified producers in Africa. Giorgio Dal Fiume, President of the World Fair Trade Organization–Europe presented in his speech what Fair Trade Organisations in Europe are doing to raise awareness and support small producers in the South.

The event took place in the context of the Fair Trade week in Belgium - an initiative of the Belgium Development Cooperation – and the Vote for Fair Trade campaign which is funded by the European Commission and includes Fair Trade organisations from around Europe to advocate together for Fair Trade.

“It is time for the EU to give prominence to this topic by putting forward a European Strategy for Fair Trade which will contribute to giving much needed coherence to EU policies in trade and development. Especially taking opportunity of the upcoming European Year for Development in 2015.” concluded Sergi Corbalán, Executive Director of the Fair Trade Advocacy Office.

A pdf version of this press release can be found here.

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The Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO) speaks out on behalf of the Fair Trade movement for Fair Trade and Trade Justice with the aim to improve the livelihoods of marginalised producers and workers in the South. The FTAO is a joint initiative of Fairtrade International, the European Fair Trade Association and the World Fair Trade Organization-Europe. Through these three networks the FTAO represents an estimate of 2.5 million Fair Trade producers and workers from 70 countries, 24 labelling initiatives, over 500 specialised Fair Trade importers, 4,000 World Shops and more than 100,000 volunteers.

Contact:
Peter Möhringer | moehringer@fairtrade-advocacy.org | Tel: +32 (0)2 54 31 92 3
Fair Trade Advocacy Office | Village Partenaire - bureau 1 | 15 rue Fernand Bernierstraat | 1060 Brussels – Belgium www.fairtrade-advocacy.org