The Local Goes Global in the Fair Trade Beyond 2015 Campaign

10 November 2012 (Poznan) - The Mayor of Poznan launched today the Fair Trade Beyond 2015 Campaign, at the 6th International Fair Trade Towns Conference held in Poland. The Campaign is expected to achieve global results, uniting local leaders, civil society and the private sector in a call for just and ethical trade rules and practices to be incorporated in the future development framework that will take on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, when they expire in 2015.

There is an ongoing global debate on what the future development framework beyond 2015 should look like. As a part of the discussions, the Fair Trade movement places two essential elements on the development agenda: trade and partnerships.

Trade, when carried out under just and ethical circumstances, can ensure sustainable development by securing human rights and offering better trading conditions to those that have not benefited from conventional global trade. In other words, trade can be one concrete tool in the hands of disadvantaged producers and farmers to guarantee development for themselves and their communities.

Fair Trade builds bridges between local authorities, civil society, the public and the private sector through long term partnerships. To make the most out of existing means and resources for development we need to partner up. One example of successful cross stakeholder collaboration is the International Fair Trade Towns Campaign that unites over 1,100 towns in 18 countries worldwide.

Poznan is the first city in Poland that has received the status of a Fair Trade Town and is also the host of this years’ Fair Trade Towns Conference. This means that the city of Poznan has committed to support Fair Trade and guarantees that Fair Trade products are available for its citizens.

A major part of the Campaign asks leaders of towns to sign a Fair Trade Beyond 2015 Declaration that will be sent to their world leaders participating at the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on development in New York, in September 2013. The Mayor of Poznan, Ryszard Grobelny, is the first to sign the Campaign’s Fair Trade Beyond 2015 Declaration and stated, “Mayors and other local leaders have the means to promote global development and this campaign is one example on how we can take our responsibility”.

The Fair Trade movement believes in the role of local leaders and local efforts to achieve global development. Although the objectives are global, the implementation of development policies lies at a local level and on the tables of town leaders. Local authorities represent the needs and visions of their citizens and know best how to overcome the challenges they are facing.

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In 2000, 189 nations made a promise to free people from extreme poverty and multiple deprivations. This pledge became the eight Millennium Development Goals to be achieved by 2015. As the deadline approaches, the United Nations and its members are discussing the future policy frame they wish to have after 2015. The United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on the beyond 2015 development framework will gather in New York in September 2013. More information.

Fair Trade products are traded and marketed through two distinct but complementary channels: the integrated supply chain route (World Fair Trade Organization) and the product certification route (Fairtrade International).

Fair Trade Towns are towns, cities, villages, islands, counties, zones, regions and universities that have made a commitment to support the principles of Fair. Fair Trade Towns are a shared achievement and an opportunity for local governments, schools, businesses, community organisations and civil society to work together. Today, there are over 1,100 Fair Trade Towns in 18 countries worldwide. More information.

The Polish Fair Trade Association (PFTA) was established in 2003 by a group of enthusiast and is one of the founders of the Polish Fair Trade Coalition – a platform gathering civil society organisations working for Fair Trade. Since 2009, the PFTA leads the Fair Trade Towns Campaign in Poland. More information.

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. More information.