Uniting World Mayors for Fair Trade

27 May 2013 (Rio de Janeiro) – Support from the Mayors of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Seoul (South Korea), Poznan (Poland) and Oxford (United Kingdom), together with other world cities, to the “Fair Trade Beyond 2015” Declaration has been unveiled today. This declaration calls on world leaders to support Fair Trade in the post-2015 global sustainable development framework that will replace the Millennium Development Goals.

The “Fair Trade Beyond 2015” campaign - which kicked-off at the 6th International Fair Trade Towns Conference on 10 November 2012, with the signature of the “Fair Trade Beyond 2015” Declaration by the Mayor of the host city, Poznan - has found support of numerous fellow local authorities’ leaders around the globe. From Malmö (Sweden) in the North via New Koforidua (Ghana) to Rosario (Argentina) in the South, from Milan (Italy) in the West via Cologne (Germany) to Kumamoto (Japan) in the East and from many more cities in between, local leaders are speaking out for the need to reform trade rules and practices in order to overcome inequalities and to empower small producers and marginalised workers. By signing the “Fair Trade Beyond 2015” Declaration, the Mayors of these towns are jointly calling for a new global framework that aims to create a just, equitable and sustainable world and to support Fair Trade as a best-practice partnership for development between governments, local authorities, businesses and citizens. Support by locally elected leaders reinforces even further the recent resolution by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an International Organisation of Parliaments who asked governments to continue to promote and support Fair Trade and to include it “as an integral component of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will be part of the post-2015 development agenda”.

During the week (26 to 31 May 2013) when Rio de Janeiro holds the title of “Global Fair Trade Capital”, Mayor Eduardo Paes has re-confirmed the sustainability credentials of his city, host of the Earth Summit in 1992 and of the recent follow-up “Rio+20” United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012. At today’s official ceremony to launch the 12th Biennial Conference of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), the signatures of the supporting Mayors have been handed over to the Brazilian government Minister of Labour and Employment, Manoel Dias.

In a video address, Filip Kaczmarek - lead Member of the European Parliament, responsible for the Parliament’s input into the “Beyond 2015” discussions - congratulated the Fair Trade movement on what he regards as a campaign "of vital importance" to ensure that “Fair Trade is core to the new agenda”. Fair Trade is to him a “key tool for sustainable development”.

In the run-up to the United Nations High-Level meeting on the global sustainable development framework that will replace the Millennium Development Goals, scheduled for 23 September
2013, the signatures of the supporting Mayors will be presented to the participating government leaders, the European Union and the United Nations. “We call on world Mayors to join their fellow colleagues in thinking globally and act locally” stated, Sergi Corbalán, Executive Director of the Fair Trade Advocacy Office.

The press release can also be found on the Fair Trade Advocacy Office website. The list of signatories and further information can be found here.

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.

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