



Committee of the Regions speaks out for Fair Trade

11 February 2010 (Brussels) – The Fair Trade movement applauds the European Union’s Committee of the Regions (CoR) in its unanimous adopting yesterday evening of an opinion¹ in support of Fair Trade and calling for the need to adopt a European Strategy and action plan for Fair Trade for Local and Regional Authorities.

Sergi Corbalán, on behalf of the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO), Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO) and the European Fair Trade Association (EFTA)² stated *“We welcome the Committee of the Regions’ support for Fair Trade and a European Strategy and action plan for Fair Trade for Local and Regional Authorities.”*

The Committee of the Regions’ opinion adopted yesterday calls on the local and regional authorities, EU Member States, European Commission, and the Committee of the Regions, to join forces to further support Fair Trade. Specifically, it calls on the need to adopt a European Strategy and action plan for Fair Trade for Local and Regional Authorities.

A large number of local and regional authorities are already very active in supporting Fair Trade. Their Fair Trade Public Procurement policies, awareness-campaigns, and cooperation with Fair Trade projects in the South are witness to the local and regional authorities’ commitment in support of marginalised producers and workers in the South.

One of the key tools for local and regional authorities to support Fair Trade is by promoting Fair Trade Public Procurement. EFTA’s Public Affairs Project has put in place a European Observatory on Fair Trade Public Procurement, which provides information and best practices to this end³.

The European Parliament issued a Resolution on Fair Trade and Development in 2006, to which the Commission has only given partial follow-up⁴. Since then, the Fair Trade networks have been calling on the European Commission to come up with a comprehensive Fair Trade work plan.

Corbalán states, “The new European Commission should not turn a deaf ear to the clear and loud message from local and regional authorities and also adopt a Fair Trade work plan for the coming years.”

The Fair Trade movement look forward to continuing the cooperation with EU Institutions, EU Member States, local and regional authorities with the goal of improving the livelihoods of marginalised producers and workers in the South.

¹ CoR 214/2009 rev. 1 - RELEX-IV-026

² World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO): www.wfto.com, Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO): www.fairtrade.net and the European Fair Trade Association (EFTA): <http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/>

³ European Observatory on Fair Trade Public Procurement: <http://www.eftafairtrade.org/observatory>

⁴ Communication from the Commission: Contributing to Sustainable Development: The role of Fair Trade and non-governmental trade-related sustainability assurance schemes, 5th May 2009 [COM\(2009\) 215 final](http://ec.europa.eu/commission/press_corner/detail/news/2009_05_05_01)

Fair Trade Advocacy Office

Village Partenaire – bureau 9A • 15 Rue Fernand Bernierstraat • B-1060 Brussels • Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 543 19 23, Fax: +32 (0)2 543 44 81

email : info@fairtrade-advocacy.org