



INVITATION

to the 2016 WFTO-Europe Biennial Conference and AGM

Brussels, 3 February 2016

Dear friends and colleagues,

You are cordially invited to the WFTO European Biennial Conference and WFTO-Europe's Annual General Meeting (AGM) taking place in **Wuppertal, Germany, from 2nd to 4th June 2016**.

WFTO-Europe's AGMs always represent a key moment to strengthen our WFTO network and Fair Trade movement. This functions as a physical space to meet and get to know each other. Also to debate and to coordinate our Fair Trade activities, as well as to take key decisions regarding the future of Fair Trade in general and more specifically of WFTO-Europe and Global.

This is why we would like to count on the presence and active participation of as many European WFTO members as possible. In the current period of economic and social hardship for several Organisations working on social and economic justice like us, this Conference and AGM will be of utmost importance to share experiences, to strengthen our networking activities and to continue building our common future as a family of Fair Trade Organisations.

Bearing this in mind, the Conference and AGM Program (enclosed with this letter) is really intensive and includes several important issues. Please let me outline below some of them:

- We will debate and vote for the **WFTO Europe 2016/18 Strategic Plan**. For the first time this Board invested energy and thoughts to propose to you a "medium terms" vision and key priorities for WFTO Europe. This is crucial to strengthen our network and have a stronger impact. At the same time, we will work on our own Strategic plan, putting high attention to the draft WFTO Global first Strategic Plan. This will be presented by the WFTO Global representatives on the first day of the Conference.
- We designed the Conferences' Program not only to listen to speakers and fill your head with information and documents, but also to give more space to you: the participants! Towards this aim, the **general aim of the Conference is to create a space to do networking and to find a common voice among us**. We planned plenary sessions and workshops where you will be invited to present your feedback on specific issues and to share your opinion on the most relevant Fair Trade issues.
- We will meet the **President of WFTO-Africa and Middle East, Mrs. Basma Barham, from the Palestinian Fair Trade producer "Holy Land handicraft Cooperative Society"** in Beit Sahour. We will receive her feedback and experience on our Program and outcomes. As well, we will get to know more about the critical situation in Africa and Middle East, and generally on the Muslim countries.

Subjects as advocacy, implementation of WFTO Retailers Standard, the Fair Trade Towns Campaign, as well as essential documents and decisions for WFTO-Europe such as the 2015 final account and 2016 budget, the Annual Report, new member(s) of the Board and membership fees will be at the heart of these 3 days as well.



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It is also important to underline that our network is steadily increasing: we have more members (81- as of today) than 2 years ago and other possible members are knocking on our doors. Therefore, this Conference will be a unique occasion to meet and to mix historical and new members, young and expert fair traders! **Please, do not miss this opportunity and be with us!**

The second day of the Conference will be hosted by GEPA and it will be a great opportunity to get more familiar with the German Fair Trade movement. A big thank to GEPA to host and assist us in finding the right location.

WFTO-Europe Board and staff have worked hard to make this conference as affordable as possible. We succeeded to make the conference fee less expensive than in 2010 and previous Conferences. Almost the same as in 2012 and 2014. The normal registration fee is 480 € per participant, but pay attention to the **early registration fee (that is: those paid until 28th of March 2016) of only 440€ per participant.**

Registrations are open from today. You can register [online](#) or via the Registration Form we will send you in a separate email in just few days. Deadline for the normal registration is the 28th of April 2016 at 12:00 CET (Central European Time). More details are available in the enclosed document.

If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact the WFTO-Europe's Office at administration@wfto-europe.org for logistical issues or conference content.

On behalf of WFTO-Europe Board of Directors I am looking forward to welcoming you at this Conference.

Giorgio Dal Fiume
The WFTO-Europe's President