

Belfast's dual Fairtrade City status renewed

13 February 2012

Belfast, NORTHERN IRELAND: With Fairtrade Fortnight now less than two weeks' away, Belfast is celebrating having had its dual status as a 'Fairtrade City' renewed for a further two years, to November 2013, through the leadership and direction of Dr Christopher Stange - Hon. Consul of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) to Northern Ireland and Chair of Fairtrade Belfast.

To mark the event, a reception was held by the Lord Mayor of Belfast in the City Hall to commemorate the achievements of the Fairtrade Belfast Committee - a voluntary organisation, comprised of representatives from local and foreign government, non-governmental organisations, educational institutions, charities, ethnic minority sector, supermarkets, retailers, business and individuals.



L-R: Lord Mayor of Belfast, Cllr. Niall Ó Donnghaile and Dr Christopher Stange, Chair of Fairtrade Belfast and Hon. Consul for St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Northern Ireland holding Fairtrade City renewal certificate

Fairtrade Belfast Committee Members with Lord Mayor of Belfast holding Fairtrade City renewal certificate

Belfast was the first place to attain dual Fairtrade accreditation - gaining Fairtrade City status in 2005 from the UK Fairtrade Foundation and then in 2006 from Fairtrade Ireland.

The Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Niall Ó Donnghaile commented on the renewal:

“On behalf of the people of Belfast, I would like to commend the dedicated voluntary work of the committee and maintaining Belfast’s status as a Fairtrade City for all these years. Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world.”

By getting companies to pay fair prices, Fairtrade addresses the injustices of modern trade, which can penalise the poorest producers. It enables them to improve their position and have greater control over their own lives. Fairtrade is about local consumerism and

procurement, having an effect in an international context. Fairtrade helps over 8 million people in the developing world, particularly the Caribbean and Africa, with UK sales over £1.17 billion. This has only been possible from the commitment to Fairtrade of large businesses, government, independent retailers, hospitality market and individuals.

Dr Christopher Stange, Chair of Fairtrade Belfast and from the Consulate of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in Comber added:

“We can all play our part by choosing the Fairtrade option, looking for the Fairtrade certification mark, when out shopping. Fairtrade is for developing world farmers, producing commodities we do not produce in Northern Ireland but readily consume. Therefore, due to the vulnerability of marginalised producers, especially in the Caribbean and Africa, it is vital to ensure they are receiving a fair price for their efforts and can access markets, which is guaranteed through Fairtrade.”

Fairtrade Belfast currently is finalising plans for events during Fairtrade Fortnight, which runs from February 27 – March 11.

For more information please visit our website: www.fairtradebelfast.org

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