



## All Party Group on Fairtrade

### Fairtrade Accreditation for Northern Ireland Tops the Agenda

04 March 2014

**Belfast, NORTHERN IRELAND:** The All Party Group on Fairtrade (APGF) is pleased to announce its recent formation and cross-party support to achieve Fairtrade accreditation for Northern Ireland, as a devolved region.

Today marks the official launch of the APGF during Fairtrade Fortnight 2014 with special guests – Fairtrade cashew nut producer from El Salvador, Alex Flores and Fairtrade sugar cane producer from Belize, Alfredo Ortega.

Invited guests included MLAs, CEOs of the Local Council Authorities, Fairtrade Steering Groups across Northern Ireland and Charities/NGOs/businesses involved in Fairtrade.

Secretariat support for the APGF is provided by the Consulate for St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Northern Ireland. This support lead to the initiative and establishment of the Group and is on-going.



L-R: Jim Wells MLA – Treasurer APGF;  
Dominic Bradley MLA; Alex Flores – El  
Salvador Fairtrade Producer; Alfredo  
Ortega – Belize Fairtrade Producer; Dr  
Christopher Stange – Secretariat APGF,  
Consulate of St. Vincent and the  
Grenadines to Northern Ireland; Pat  
Ramsey MLA – Chair APGF

The APGF is a cross-party group of MLAs which was established on February 4, 2014 and is currently chaired by Pat Ramsey MLA.

The agreed purpose of the APGF is to create a mechanism for representatives involved with Fairtrade (Local Government, Fairtrade Steering Committees Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), universities/colleges, schools, places of worship (churches) and businesses) to discuss and lobby with politicians on issues of Fairtrade with the primary objective to achieve Fairtrade accreditation for Northern Ireland, as a devolved region.”

The concept of Fairtrade accreditation for Northern Ireland, developed from the Fairtrade Towns initiative with criteria established for the Northern Ireland Assembly, Government (Central and Local) and the public/private sector to achieve Fairtrade status for Northern Ireland.

- All cities and at least 55% of local authorities to have Fairtrade status.
- All local authority areas and at least 55% of towns with a population of 6,000 or more to have active Fairtrade groups working towards Fairtrade status.
- At least 60 per cent of higher education institutions to have active Fairtrade groups working towards Fairtrade status.
- Parliament/Assembly and Government to use, promote and make available Fairtrade products internally, and to actively promote Fairtrade Fortnight each year.
- Fairtrade to be promoted in schools through the curriculum, procurement and other possible means.
- Schools, Further Education Institutions, Faith Groups, Trade Unions, business networks, voluntary and youth organisations to pledge to use and promote Fairtrade.

Pat Ramsey MLA said: “Northern Ireland is showing how a region can take steps to bring about big changes globally. In the case of Fairtrade we are making a huge impact on the lives of developing world producers and their families. We look forward to the challenge and vision of achieving Fairtrade accreditation for Northern Ireland, encouraging all stakeholders, to embrace this initiative and make Northern Ireland a Fairtrade region.



Fairtrade provides a commitment to enable the most disadvantaged developing world's small-scale producers to successfully trade in the global market in order to alleviate poverty, working towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), through purchasing and procurement of Fairtrade certified products.

**ENDS**

**Editor's Notes:**

**Officers and Members of the Group**

Chairperson - Pat Ramsey MLA (SDLP)  
Vice-Chairperson - Steven Agnew MLA (Green)  
Secretary - Megan Fearon MLA (Sinn Féin)  
Treasurer - Jim Wells MLA (DUP)  
Chris Lyttle MLA (Alliance)  
Phil Flanagan MLA (Sinn Féin)  
Anna Lo MLA (Alliance)  
David McNarry MLA (UKIP)  
Robin Swann MLA (UUP)  
John Dallat MLA (SDLP)  
David McClarty MLA (Independent)

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