



Press Release

27.09.2010/Monday

Commerce minister to promote Fair Trade sector in Bangladesh

The trade and commerce minister of Bangladesh, Col (ret) Faruk Khan pledged to facilitate the fair trade movement in Bangladesh in order to eradicate poverty by establishing sustainable economy for the marginal population. He assured his commitment to negotiate with the government regarding fair trade and its development in the country.

‘Let me know any recommendations needed related to the development of this sector, I will try my best to put it forward to the National Assembly or the responsible bodies of the government,’ he stated while speaking as the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the three day biannual conference of the World Fair Trade Organization-Asia, held at BRAC-CDM in Dhaka on Sunday evening.

He also expressed his gratitude to the organizers and the participants of the conference, and hoped to preserve the culture and traditions of Asia through Fair Trade.

The Annual General Meeting of WFTO-Asia was also held on the final day of the conference. The members elected its new board of directors for 2010-2011. Mr. Ravi Jayawardena from Sri Lanka was elected as the new president of WFTO-Asia, while Mr. Shah Abdus Salam and Mrs. Bertha Geeti Baroi from Bangladesh were respectively elected as the secretary and treasurer of the organization.

The conference was attended by 120 delegates including local and foreign specialists, traders, producers and organizers. The speakers revealed different aspects of the Fair Trade movement including condition of artisans, development of their life-standard, difficulties in trading their products, and also sought solutions to these problems.

There was debate and discussion over the current situation and prospects of Fair Trade around the world, especially in Asia. And the specialists decided to strengthen the regional networks to build up a sustainable infrastructure.

They also noted the conference was a unique opportunity for Bangladesh to promote Fair Trade in the country which could benefit disadvantaged artisan communities thus achieving economic empowerment. It also promoted traditional Bangladeshi craft products to the international market.

The conference was organized by ECOTA Fair Trade Forum (EFTF), the national networking body of Fair Trade organizations in Bangladesh. They promote Fair Trade opportunities for artisan communities and facilitate the access of Fair Trade products to national and international market. EFTF has been working with Small and Medium Fair Trade Enterprises since 1990. Currently EFTF works with over 115,000 artisans (80% are women) through its 37 member organizations of whom over 70% are exporters.

Yours sincerely,

Shah Abdus Salam
Secretary, WFTO-Asia



Conference Delegates



AGM and Election



Chief Guest Mr. Faruk Khan, M.P. and Minister for Commerce



Opening by Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University and WFTO President Mr. Paul Mayers

