

Media Advisory

Press Conference on the Consumers International's publication entitled "*Checked Out: Are Supermarkets taking Responsibility for Labor Conditions in Developing Countries*" (hosted by the CSD Secretariat)

In preparation of the upcoming Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD) annual meeting scheduled to take place from 3 to 14 May 2010 in New York, the CSD Secretariat is organizing a series of thematic seminars to inform delegates of technical issues related to the topics of the current CSD cycle.

- WHAT:** Briefing on the Consumers International's publication entitled "*Checked Out: Are Supermarkets taking Responsibility for Labor Conditions in Developing Countries*"
- WHO:** The following experts will brief the press about the key findings of the report.
- Ms. Catherine Nicholson, Senior Project Coordinator, Consumers International,
 - Mr. Thomas Graedel, Director, Center for Industrial Ecology,
 - Mr. Jim Fava, Managing Director, Five Winds International.
 - Mr. Tariq Banuri, Director, Division of Sustainable Development, will make a few introductory remarks.
 - Mr. Tim Wall, Information Officer, Department of Information will moderate the discussion.
- WHEN:** Tuesday, 30 March 2010 at 1:15 p.m.
- WHERE:** Library Auditorium, United Nations Headquarters

BACKGROUND

The report is a study of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies of leading supermarkets in eight European countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain. It focuses on their policies relating to labour conditions and trading relationships in developing country supply chains. It has revealed an inadequate and, at times, contradictory approach to addressing unacceptable labour conditions in the developing world.

According to the survey European consumers are increasingly concerned about the social impact of their consumption choices. There is widespread support amongst consumers for supermarkets paying their suppliers a fair price even if this led to higher prices for consumers.

The survey also shows that there is growing recognition of the importance of incorporating issues of sustainability into all decision-making. It concluded that overall, there is a need to develop policies on labour conditions and trading relations and implement them through multi-stakeholder processes wherever possible and processes should be put in place for independent verification. It encourages supermarkets to publish clear information about their CSR policies

and their implementation. It urges governments to introduce Right to Know legislation, or review existing legislation if it is not effective, to ensure that consumers have access to information about the sustainability of products and services.

The report will be launched at a seminar on the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Patterns to be held the same day in the ECOSOC Chamber (North Lawn Building) from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Copies of the report and of the press release will be available at the press conference.

Please note that an interactive panel to launch the report will take place in the morning from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the ECOSOC Chamber (North Lawn Building).

Live webcast: www.un.org/webcast

For additional information please contact:

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