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European Confederation of the Footwear Industry

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The CEC calls for the second International Footwear Forum in New York

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On the 9th June 2016, footwear associations and federations from around the world will gather in New York for the Second International Footwear Forum (IFF) to discuss the latest relevant issues of common interest to the footwear industry. Launched by the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC), the IFF provides an annual platform for national and international footwear associations to exchange information and best practices about their industry and explore solutions to common challenges.

Following its inauguration at the MICAM in September 2015, the second edition of the International Footwear Forum will take place on the 9th of June 2016 at FFANY New York Shoe Expo with the support of the Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA).

The aim of the IFF is to gather representatives of footwear associations and chambers from around the world to facilitate dialogue on economic and societal changes which bring challenges and opportunities to the footwear sector and to promote exchange of information and best practices.

The main topics of this year's Forum will include how trade associations can improve the engagement of their members with innovative communication tools, while becoming an efficient interlocutor for the public authorities. This year, the Forum will also focus on analysing the latest news and specific needs of the industry in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility. Last but not least, the participants will address the promotion of global competitiveness with the latest advanced manufacturing, while exploring ways to help business to expand export opportunities while lowering trade barriers around the world.

In this relation, Cleto Sagripanti, President of CEC, underlined: "We have to join efforts in our requests to public bodies for improving trade facilitation in this globalised world, and ensuring that a level playing field is respected". He added: "It is important that we make our governments understand that our companies can reach consumers in every corner in the world. We do have the tools thanks to the Internet and the latest technologies, we only need the will and commitment from public authorities".

On the occasion of the visit to NY, the CEC also announced the signature of a Joint Statement together with the American Apparel and Footwear Association and the RFDA to urge the EU and US authorities to ensure a satisfactory conclusion of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). With the elimination of the existing high import tariffs and cumbersome administrative and customs procedures, EU-US footwear trade is expected to increase substantially.

"The discussions undertaken under the International Footwear Forum will provide further joint initiatives. It is clear that together with other footwear associations, we can do more for our footwear businesses", concluded Sagripanti.