



Confédération Européenne de la Chaussure
European Footwear Confederation

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Global footwear representatives together for free and fair trade in the footwear sector

Representatives of footwear national associations and industry chambers of five continents signed a joint declaration in support of free and fair trade during the third International Footwear Forum held in Porto on the 16th May.

On the occasion of a successful 20th UITIC International Technical Footwear Congress's week organised by APICCAPS, the Portuguese Footwear, Components, Leather Goods Manufacturers' Association and CTCP, the Portuguese Footwear Technology Centre, high representatives of national footwear associations and chambers from all over the world convened in Porto under the **International Footwear Forum**, focused in this third edition on International Trade.

Launched by the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC) in 2015, the Forum acts as a platform to exchange information, consider common initiatives and address emerging challenges by possibly finding collaborative solutions to work on.

In this view, and in light of the increase of protectionist measures across the world during the last years, the participants have approved a **joint declaration** committing themselves to cooperating for **free and fair trade in the footwear sector**.

They recognise that protectionism reduces consumption, investment and employment opportunities, consequently slowing down the competitiveness and growth of footwear companies. Therefore, the signatories firmly state their opposition to every sort of tariff and/or non-tariff barrier and call for policy makers to work towards the establishment of a level playing field for an open and fair global market with no dumping and counterfeiting practices. They express their commitment to support the achievement of this goal by sharing information with and transmitting their position to their respective national governments.

Cleto Sagripanti, President of CEC, commented after the Forum: "On a medium-long term, protectionist regimes can only contribute to make their companies more fragile. In a fast-evolving global economy and society, governed by consumers, national associations and policy makers should instead be working on joint initiatives to ensure that our companies can benefit from the trade opportunities of an open and fair market. Today is an important day for our global footwear industry as I believe it is the beginning of a transparent and open collaboration between five continents' representatives for a fair and free trade."

Read the "Joint Declaration" on [CEC website](http://www.cec-footwearindustry.eu).