Brussels, 11 February 2014

- To all EFFAT Member Organisations and EFFAT General Assemblies for the Agriculture, Food, Drink and Tobacco, and Tourism Sectors

Re: Political message arising from first EFFAT Youth Committee meeting

Dear colleagues

As mentioned in our circular of 20 December 2013, EFFAT has established a Youth Committee that will meet regularly as one of EFFAT’s constitutional committees and will be represented at meetings of the EFFAT governing bodies.

At its inaugural meeting of 9 December 2013, the Youth Committee nominated its President, Vice President and Steering Committee members, as follows:

- President – Tanja Fynbo (3F, Denmark)
- Vice-President – Inge Gielis (ACV-CSC, Belgium)
- Steering Committee members – Emilia Bianchi (FAI CISL, Italy), Sascha Ernszt (OEGB-L, Austria), Emina Karo (Toleyis, Turkey), Blaine Kilgallon (Unite, UK), Thomas Klösch (PROGE, Austria).

Tanja Fynbo will represent the Youth Committee at EFFAT Management Committee meetings, and both Tanja Fynbo and Inge Gielis will do so within the EFFAT Executive Committee. A full list of Youth Committee members and the sectors that they represent is attached at Annex 1. Please note that that membership of the Committee remains open and EFFAT members are encouraged to nominate participants to ensure a balanced representation of genders, regions and sectors.

The EFFAT Youth Committee delegates expressed unanimous enthusiasm for the formal reinstatement of youth issues in EFFAT’s work program and agreed to tackle two priorities:

1. organising young workers, which includes improving the image of trade unions, and undertaking positive campaigns to better inform young people of the benefits of union membership
2. ensuring that trade unions not only employ young staff and attract young trade union delegates, but enable them to actively participate in decision-making roles and bodies within trade unions.

Secondary priorities that will be addressed by the EFFAT Youth Committee include the forced emigration of young people, the future of trade unions, especially in countries where they are under increasing pressure, and the quality of apprenticeships and traineeships, which must not be exploited by employers as a source of cheap labour.

The Committee hopes that these important issues facing young workers will be mainstreamed in EFFAT’s work and tackled through sector-specific initiatives.

The Committee is currently working to develop a 2015-2019 work program for adoption at the fourth EFFAT Congress on 20-21 November 2014, and asks that the General Assemblies will be used as a forum to discuss its implementation.
The Steering Committee will also organise and lead a session at the Congress that they hope will result in a signed pledge by all EFFAT member organisations to take youth issues seriously.

The Committee further agreed to cooperate with other European trade union federations on a joint youth employment campaign, as most issues facing young workers in Europe today transcend national and sectoral borders.

On 7 March in Athens, the federations will launch their ‘Take back the future’ campaign at a UNI Europa youth seminar, and outline their demands of the new European Parliament and European Commission, and of employers. The campaign aims are further explained in a recent article published by Harald Wiedenhofer and fellow General Secretaries on the online newspaper Policy Review, available here: [http://www.policyreview.eu/trade-unions-will-take-back-the-future-for-disenfranchised-youth-claim-leaders/](http://www.policyreview.eu/trade-unions-will-take-back-the-future-for-disenfranchised-youth-claim-leaders/)

The European trade union federations will also hold a joint event in Croatia later in 2014 on the theme of organising young workers, which young EFFAT members will be invited to participate in.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that trade unions, policy makers and employers put the pressing issue of youth employment high on their agendas.

Yours sincerely

Harald Wiedenhofer
EFFAT General Secretary

Tanja Fynbo, 3F Denmark
President, EFFAT Youth Committee