



PRESS RELEASE

WTO Doha Round Negotiations Producers from all over the world urge WTO Members to improve the protection of Geographical Indications

In an open letter sent to WTO negotiators on 4 of June 2007, the President and Vice-Presidents of OriGIn, the international organisation of Geographical Indications' producers, call for concrete results on the enhancement of GI protection in the context of the Doha Round.

Geneva, 6 June 2007. – At a crucial time in the negotiations of the Doha Round, OriGIn's leading representatives have launched an International appeal in favour of Geographical Indications (GIs). Geographical Indications are an important intellectual property tool for producers of typical products that are rooted in a specific territory.

Joining forces, the President and Vice-Presidents of OriGIn coming from Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Italy, India, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Peru and Spain wrote to trade ministers and negotiators to urge them to improve GI protection.

Luis Fernando Samper, Director General of Intellectual Property for the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia and President of OriGIn declared: *“My colleagues and I are acting on behalf of millions of producers around the world who expect the Doha Round negotiations to provide better protection of our traditional and exceptional products. Current WTO rules on GIs are unbalanced and do not help producers to fend off abuse in an effective way. There is an urgent need to establish fair International trade rules to allow for an efficient protection of Geographical Indications”.*

OriGIn members consider that the WTO TRIPs Agreement currently does not offer the legal means to prevent the abuses of their GI names. They call for the modification of Article 23 TRIPs to allow all GI products to benefit from the level of protection currently granted only GI wines and spirits. OriGIn also supports the establishment of a multilateral register on GIs that would be open to all products.

The President of OriGIn concluded: *“The livelihood of millions of people from developed and developing countries depends on their ability to successfully promote and defend their Geographical Indications. Progress on GIs protection in the coming weeks is therefore of the utmost importance.”*

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For more information, you may contact the Secretary General of OriGIn, Mrs. Ester Olivás Cáceres, at the following phone number: +34.96.520.11.33; E-mail: info@origin-gi.com; Website: www.origin-gi.com

OriGIn is the first international network of Geographical Indications' producers. Launched in June 2003, OriGIn represents producers in excess of two million from all over the world: Africa, Asia, North and South America, Eastern and Western Europe. OriGIn promotes Geographical Indication as a development tool, in particular through direct partnerships between producers. It also lobbies in favour of better protection of Geographical Indications at the international level.