

Buy Fair Trade this Christmas

✘ International Development Minister Humza Yousaf yesterday urged shoppers in Scotland to opt for a Christmas with a conscience this year.

Mr Yousaf officially opened the Ethical Christmas Fair at Edinburgh's Ocean Terminal, where he met Fairtrade stockists from across Scotland and producers of fairly traded and ethically sourced goods from Kenya and Bali.

With what's expected to be Scotland's busiest shopping weekend looming, Mr Yousaf took his opportunity to stock up on festive Fair Trade gifts, and encouraged Scots shoppers to spend some of their Christmas budget this year on fairly traded gifts, decorations, food, cards, candles or stocking-fillers.

The Fair Trade movement ensures producers in developing countries are paid a fair price for their work, helping them and their families out of poverty and supporting them to participate in global markets without fear of exploitation. Scotland was declared one of the world's first Fair Trade nations in February 2013.

✘ Mr Yousaf said:

"A recent survey suggested the average Scot will spend almost £420 this year on Christmas gifts. Meanwhile in third world countries, some of the world's poorest, most vulnerable people are living in poverty and struggling to provide basic food and shelter for themselves and their families.

"So with what is expected to be this year's busiest shopping weekend just a couple of days away, I am asking the people of Scotland to consider spending even just a small portion of their gift budget on fairly traded items this year.

"It's plain to see at this Christmas market that there is now

an extensive range of ethical and fairly traded goods with more than 4,500 certified Fairtrade products bearing the blue and green mark available. So why not fill a stocking with some Fair Trade chocolate, coffee, olive oil or wonderful handicrafts?

“Just by buying one of them, you can do your bit to address poverty and help to protect less fortunate families and communities around the world this Christmas.”

Martin Rhodes, Director of the Scottish Fair Trade Forum, said:

“By buying Fair Trade gifts at Christmas, people here in Scotland are showing their commitment to a fair deal for farmers, workers and producers across the globe.”

