**UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights**

**Visit to Immokalee, Florida**

**16 January, 2014**

“We are here to support the Immokalee workers and the Fair Food Program, which offers such promise for us all," said Alexandra Guáqueta, chair of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights. "It’s great to see the world’s biggest retailer, Walmart, join this kind of ground-breaking accountability arrangement.”

In particular, the Working Group noted the Fair Food Program’s “smart mix” of tools. “It combines law enforcement with rules agreed to by the parties which go beyond existing regulation. Together these deliver respect for human rights and better living standards for workers”, noted Ms. Guáqueta. “Workers are consulted, they lead on peer education on human rights, and existing US labor laws are upheld. Furthermore, the Program includes market incentives for growers and retailers, monitoring policies and, crucially, a robust and accessible mechanism to resolve complaints and provide remedy. Workers have no fear of retaliation if they identify problems.”

The Working Group noted that the Fair Food Program is closely aligned with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, endorsed by States at the UN Human Rights Council in 2011. “We are eager to see whether the Fair Food Program is able to leverage further change within participating businesses, and serve as a model elsewhere in the world,” added Ms. Guáqueta.

**Note to editors**

The Working Group on the issue of transnational corporations and other business enterprises (Business and Human Rights) was established by the United Nations Human Rights Council in June 2011. The five members are Mr. Michael Addo, Ms. Alexandra Guáqueta (current Chairperson), Ms. Margaret Jungk, Mr. Puvan Selvanathan and Mr. Pavel Sulyandziga. The Working Group is independent from any government or organization. It reports to the UN Human Rights Council and to the UN General Assembly.

Learn more, visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Pages/WGHRandtransnationalcorporationsandotherbusiness.aspx>

The Working Group visited the Fair Food Program and met with buyers, growers and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers during its official country visit to the USA in April 2013. Ms. Guáqueta, Chair of the Working Group, conducted a follow up meeting in Florida on January 16, 2014, after the Fair Food Program participated in the 2013 UN Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights.