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**WIEGO Board Member / StreetNet International Vice President**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I bring you greetings from StreetNet International and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). I'm here to represent informal workers.

StreetNet is an international federation of 52 organizations in 46 countries. WIEGO is a network across 70 countries producing research, statistics and capacity building with informal workers. WIEGO is also actively involved as a Grassroots Constituency Group Partner of the General Assembly of Partners, a special platform initiative of the World Urban Campaign.

As you are all aware, informal workers are the majority of workers in most countries and we contribute to our local and national economies. For example, in Ghana, 86 percent of workers are working in the informal economy. In India, more than 90 percent of workers are in the informal economy. In Latin America, 60 percent of workers are informal. We are street vendors, waste pickers, home-based workers, domestic workers, health care workers, head porters and indigenous caterers – actors who make homes enlightened and happy.

In my city of Accra, Ghana, where I do my trading, we pay yearly, quarterly, monthly and daily tolls to the local and national authorities. My sisters from KENASVIT here in Kenya also pay yearly, monthly and daily tolls to authorities to do their vending.

It is about time that we informal economy workers are recognized and given the opportunity to speak to the issues ourselves and the opportunities to improve our livelihoods.

For instance, the ILO debate on transitioning from the informal to the formal economy shouldn't just be the talk. We must be recognized as workers and visible in documentation. Informal workers must be given education to have a smooth transition.

We informal workers do contribute, but we also have issues that need to be addressed. We informal economy workers must be included in the decision making and the planning of our cities to add our voices to let you know what we want. I'm a market vendor, so I will talk about my experience.

For example, we as market vendors must be included when there is a relocation of markets. The things that will make it conducive for us to stay as workers are water, security, good sanitation, fire equipment, daycare centers, support for disabled workers and more storage facilities. Sometimes we informal economy workers do not know which ministry is responsible for us. We need to know which ministry is responsible for us.

We strongly support the Secretary General in his recognition of the importance of the informal economy, and we thank him for all the support and encouragement of his team, **especially the Urban Economy Branch.**

No city can be inclusive, equitable and sustainable without the inputs from we informal workers. **We feed, we clothe, we care.**

Thank you.