

DANISH FASHIONWEAR AS HUMANITARIAN AID

Federation of Danish Textile & Clothing (FDTC) and the Danish Red Cross are entering an interesting co-operation. FashionAid is a new initiative by the Danish federation of textile and clothing industries, FDTC, established to facilitate the Danish fashion and textile manufacturers' activities of social responsibility. FashionAid's first activity, carried out in co-operation with the Danish Red Cross, is in the field of clothing.

As pioneers in the field of outsourcing their production, the Danish clothing and textile industries have a considerable interest in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The reason why the professional organisation FDTC is launching a new and unique initiative: FashionAid. An activity conceived with the purpose of easing the way for the companies of the sector to make their own contribution to CSR related projects and aid activities.

FashionAid's first activity is presented in connection to the Danish fashion week in Copenhagen: a unique co-operation with the Danish Red Cross - who will receive the donations of surplus and error productions of Danish fashionwear.

-Many of our member companies regularly have exceeding parties of clothes on stock, due to surplus productions or as second quality selections. Clothes that are not being sold and that are often destroyed. But which are however perfectly usable. It is an obvious idea to co-operate with the Danish Red Cross about this. All our member companies have to do is to fill in a form, and the Red Cross will come and pick up the clothes. Each company is free to decide whether the clothes should be used as such, as humanitarian aid or rather be sold through the shops of the Danish Red Cross, says Mikkel Gudsoe, lawyer and project manager in FDTC's Trade Office.

The Danish Red Cross are happy about the new initiative of FDTC and about the close co-operation.

-I believe that FashionAid will help arouse the interest of companies wishing to fortify their CSR profiles, but who may not yet feel perfectly confident about how and where to start. Hopefully, this initiative will open the eyes of a larger number of companies to the various activities of the Danish Red Cross, fitting many different types of companies. But also to the fact that we have a safe and thoroughly tested network of distribution, which ensures that the clothes will not suddenly reappear in the shops as cheap, parallel-imported goods. The sooner we get this message out, the more people will we be able to help in the world's hotspots, says Anders Ladekarl, Secretary-General of the Danish Red Cross.

The FashionAid initiative has its source in FDTC's consulting concept FairFashion. FashionAid will deal with and have its focus on activities and events of charity, offering FDTC's member companies to join in.

- With FashionAid we will strengthen and target common CSR activities in the business, creating the best possible synergies for the benefit of the people who receive our aid. At the same time, we are making it easier for the companies to join projects of charity, by a common, efficient effort. We know that many companies actually wish to participate but have difficulty in finding the necessary daily resources to do so, says Mikkel Gudsoee. FashionAid can also be a supplement to the companies' own CSR initiatives.

FashionAid is presently working on the preparation of a series of future projects of charity. And shortly, FDTC's FairFashion will present their proposal for a code of conduct specifically tailored for the textile and clothing industry.

For further information, please contact:

Mikkel Gudsoee, lawyer and project manager,

Federation of Danish Textile & Clothing, mobile ph. +45-2222 0409 or

Kenneth Oehrberg, Fundraising Manager, Danish Red Cross, mobile ph. +45-2173 3666



New clothes. An orphan in Zimbabwe carries a sack with clothes from the local Red Cross office. The newly initiated co-operation between the Danish Red Cross and Federation of Danish Textile & Clothing will provide humanitarian aid to an even larger number of vulnerable people. Photo: Tomas Bertelsen.