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**EU Report on Globalisation ‘Not Before Time’ - Harkin**

“Globalisation currently involves extra judicial courts but no binding mechanisms to enforce environmental standards, health and safety standards and decent work conditions”. These points were emphasised by Independent MEP Marian Harkin when she participated in the debate in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on the European Commission’s ‘Reflection Paper on Harnessing Globalisation’.

She said:- “I want to thank the Commission for this paper but it is not before time. Often, the debate on globalisation is polarised. On one side - we have the gung-ho supporters of free trade, regardless, and on the other we have the protectionists for whom no trade deal is ever right.

“For me, this is the challenge of our generation; to manage globalisation so that free trade is fair trade. As you said Commissioner, this must ensure that the benefits of trade are distributed fairly among our citizens. But in the last decade this has not happened in the EU. While our economy has grown overall, real incomes of middle class households have largely stagnated.

“Commissioner, some of the messages we send to our citizens are contradictory. We have, for example, extra judicial courts to enforce investor’s rights, but no binding mechanisms to enforce environmental standards, health and safety standards and decent work conditions.

“However, I do welcome the paper and the work done by Commissioner Vestager in trying to ensure that large corporations pay their fair share of tax - a crucial element for fair globalisation.

“At EU-level, investment in universal broadband access allied to long learning will be essential if EU citizens are to benefit from globalisation.

“Finally, as Rapporteur for the Globalisation Fund, I believe it has a role to play in providing a safety net but it must be adequately resourced and sufficiently flexible so that it is available to workers in the SME Sector”, Independent MEP Marian Harkin concluded.

Further information from: Marian Harkin MEP

 Tel: +086-8341758

E-mail: [marian.harkin@ep.europa.eu](mailto:marian.harkin@ep.europa.eu)

Website: [www.marianharkin.ie](http://www.marianharkin.ie/)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/marianharkin](http://www.facebook.com/marianharkin)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/MarianHarkin](http://www.twitter.com/MarianHarkin)

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