



WECF | Women in Europe for a Common Future

****** INVITATION TO PRESS EVENT ******

Protect Children – Phase out Chemicals of Concern in Toys Press Conference on Toys Safety and Toys Testing at European Parliament

Utrecht, January 20, 2012 – **WECF invites to a Press Conference and Toys Testing ‘Protect Children – Phase out Chemicals of Concern in Toys’ on the 25th of January 2012, at European Parliament in Brussels, from 15:00 till 17:00. To attend the EP registration is obligatory.**

The keynote speakers during the press event will be Michèle Rivasi, Member of the European Parliament and Member of ITRE Commission, Wolfgang Döring from the German toys label Spiel Gut and Anne Barre, President WECF France. Attendants are invited to bring their toys for testing.

Despite the new Toys Safety Directive, many toys in the EU still contain a high concentration of carcinogenic chemicals such as phthalates, brominated flame retardants and heavy metals. Europe's children are at risk of having serious health problems caused by low-dose exposure to hazardous substances in daily life, if the legislation on toys, pesticides, cosmetics and chemicals will not be improved.

WECF calls for Toxic Free Toys in the European Union. In November WECF (Women in Europe for a Common Future) organized events in both France and the Netherlands to raise awareness on chemicals of concern in toys. Results of a toys test performed on 29 toys sold in the Netherlands, France and Germany were published. A paint apron sold in a Dutch toys department store was found to contain 578 mg/kg of DEHP, a phthalate (plasticizer) banned in toys and children articles, one of the most controversial chemicals mentioned by RAPEX, the EU rapid alert system on hazardous consumer products [1]. The other tested products did not show traces of phthalates.

Heavy metals (lead, cadmium, barium, nickel) in jewelry and make-up articles

whether sold in toys department stores or in accessories shops, jewelry and make-up articles are among favorite young children's products. But they are officially not even considered to be toys. Jewelry tested showed a combined presence of lead (neurotoxin), nickel (known allergen) and cadmium. Products like this, which may be placed in the mouth by young children, should not contain such toxic cocktails.

Sacha Gabizon, International director of WECF says "We should apply the precautionary principle and not allow any carcinogenic or other known dangerous chemicals such as phthalates and brominated flame retardants in toys. They need to be excluded fully, without exception. Toys are meant to be fun, but not at the cost of our children's future".

The conference will take place at Room A7F387, European Parliament, 60rue Wiertz, Brussels, from 15:00 till 17:00. To attend, the EP registration is obligatory. Please register at celia.fontaine@europarl.europa.eu, giving your name, date of birth, the number of the identification card you intend to bring to enter the Parliament, and your city of residence.

For more information about the conference, please see the event invitation:
http://www.wecf.eu/english/articles/2012/01/toys_conference_brussels.php

or contact:

- Elisabeth Ruffinengo, WECF: elisabeth.ruffinengo@wecf.eu, +33 450 49 97 38
- Célia Fontaine, Les Verts / ALE: celia.fontaine@europarl.europa.eu, +33 6 87 28 59 89
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1. http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm

Note for the editors

For more information, please contact Chantal van den Bossche, press officer WECF tel: 0031.6.28129992, chantal.vandenbossche@wecf.eu ; www.wecf.eu

WECF is a unique network of over 100 grassroots women and environment organisations worldwide, working in multi-sector partnerships demonstrating sustainable development alternatives at the local level, and sharing lessons learned and promoting sustainable policies at the global level.

WECF has NGO consultative status with United Nations Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC) and is accredited with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).