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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin, HeadWaters International Inc.
Telephone: (612) 870-3440, Fax: (612) 870-4846, Cellular Phone: (612) 910-1110

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE ANNOUNCES TWIN CITIES BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

Minneapolis -- 1992 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum, an Indigenous Guatemalan woman, announced a new business partnership between the Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation and Minneapolis-based HeadWaters International, Inc. today at a press conference held at Central Lutheran Church.

This new enterprise links Twin Cities specialty coffee businesses with Indigenous coffee cooperatives in Guatemala through a new product called Guatemalan Peace Coffee, a gourmet coffee produced on Indigenous cooperative farms in Guatemala. Roasted in New Prague, Minnesota, the coffee will be marketed throughout the U.S. and Canada in partnership with local businesses.

This important initiative is based on fair trade criteria and is designed to open up international market outlets to small-scale Indigenous producers. The fair trade criteria ensures coffee producers a fair price and supports sustainable economic development. A portion of the sales will directly benefit the work of the Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation in Guatemala.

"Guatemalan Peace Coffee is an important project for the foundation because it sets an example of economic cooperation among Indigenous peoples and their leaders, and directly benefits Indigenous communities where the Rigoberta Menchú Foundation works," states Hugo Benitez, Executive Director of the Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation.

"I am excited and honored to work with Rigoberta Menchú and local Minnesota businesses to make Guatemalan Peace Coffee available to U.S. consumers," says Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin, president of HeadWaters International.

The signing of the Guatemalan Peace Accords in December 1996 brought an end to more than three decades of Guatemalan civil war. The Guatemalan Peace Coffee partnership represents a new model of business relations that supports sustainable economic development for Guatemalans.

Guatemalan Peace Coffee has already received a favorable reception from local, national and international coffee businesses, including The European Roasterie (New Prague, MN), ALAKEF Coffee Roasters (Duluth, MN), Coffee and Tea Limited (Minneapolis, MN), The Roasterie (Saint Paul, MN), Espresso Services (Minneapolis, MN), and Habitat Coffee (Amherst, MA).

In Canada, the Tribal Seven Gaming Supply Inc., owned by the Saskatchewan-based Saskatoon Tribal Council, will begin distribution of Guatemalan Peace Coffee in the spring of 1997.

For information on Guatemalan Peace Coffee products, contact HeadWaters International at (612) 870-3440.

P.O. Box 6177
Minneapolis, MN 55406
612/379.3892
Toll Free 888/324.7872
Fax 612/379.5982
HeadWater1@aol.com



HeadWaters International

Our Mission

To carry out profitable, fair and ethical businesses in partnership with small-scale producers around the world.

Our Vision

- To promote sustainable economic development through fair trade practices.
- To provide consumers the highest quality products available.
- To provide producers fair compensation.

Company Background

HeadWaters International, Inc. is a for-profit company based in Minnesota that was founded in 1995 by the fair trade program of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), a non-profit organization. HeadWaters' founders have a long history of working with farmers in Mexico, Guatemala and other Latin American countries to promote sustainable production and fair trade markets.

As IATP's relationships with producer and consumer partner organizations evolved over the years, HeadWaters International was founded to be the vehicle to carry out commercial operations. Through this initiative, HeadWaters International intends to ensure a fair income for small-scale producer cooperatives, and thereby develop sustainable fair trade systems that are both a way of doing business and that promote economic development internationally.

Currently, HeadWaters International works in partnership with coffee producers in Chiapas, Mexico and in Guatemala as well as international leaders including 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú Tum (a Guatemalan Indigenous women) for the promotion of Guatemalan Peace Coffee. Guatemalan Peace Coffee is a product developed with the purpose of a) supporting the Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation's work with Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala; b) supporting Indigenous coffee cooperatives; and c) presenting the example of economic justice as a critical component of the implementation of peace accords in countries like Guatemala.

HeadWaters International has also established a partnership with the Saskatoon Tribal Council in Saskatchewan, Canada to launch a new fair trade initiative to import cooperatively grown coffee. Directly supported by Indigenous businesses in Canada and Indigenous producers in Latin America, this initiative will be launched during the spring of 1997, featuring Guatemalan Peace Coffee.

HeadWaters International does business under internationally recognized fair trade criteria that ensure producers a fair income, a fair profit and sustainable economic development for their communities and families.

Our direct connections with coffee producers make it possible to offer a consistent supply and reliable delivery of high quality products. We also maintain detailed information regarding the origin of our products and the farmers who produce them.

