International Committee for October 17

INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

International Committee for October 17:
Appointment of Ms. Florence Elie

October 17, 2017, Pierrelaye, France—We are pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Florence Elie to the International Committee for October 17. The Committee was established in 2008 to promote and support the observance of the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty, observed on October 17th each year, which is recognised as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty by the United Nations.

Donald Lee, President of the International Committee, on announcing the appointment of Ms. Florence Elie said: "I am delighted to welcome Florence Elie as a member of the International Committee. She is a senior official and a well-known political leader, strongly committed to advocacy, particularly as Protector of the Citizen in Haiti. For many years she has demonstrated her unwavering commitment to defending the rights of the poorest."

Ms. Florence Elie, a lawyer by training, was a senior civil servant in the Ministry of Planning, External Cooperation and Public Service and Head of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Haiti in exile in Washington DC. In 1996 she was a member of the Cabinet of the Minister of Justice, Public Security and head of the Coordination Office for the trial of the Raboteau massacre. At the same time, she also headed the Preparatory Commission for the Reform of Law, Justice and Penal Unit. In 2000 she joined the Office of the Protector of Citizens and was later appointed Protector of Citizens for a seven years term until 2017. She was a UN adviser seconded to the Ombudsman of Timor-Leste during the period 2003-2004.

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The International Committee for October 17 was established in 2008 with the following goals: to promote the 17 of October as International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, as recognised by the United Nations, uniting those who are striving together to end poverty; to promote the observance of the 17 of October in its original spirit; and, to promote opportunities where people from a variety of backgrounds, including those whose lives are most difficult, can work together in the fight against extreme poverty as a violation of Human Rights.

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty was first celebrated as the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty at a major public rally held on the 17 of October 1987 in Paris, where one hundred thousand people from all backgrounds responded to a call from Father Joseph Wresinski, founder of ATD Fourth World, to gather at the Plaza of Liberties and Human Rights. On this day, a declaration was engraved on a Commemorative Stone proclaiming that extreme poverty is a violation of human rights and affirming the need for all people to unite to ensure that these rights are respected.

In 1992, the United Nations proclaimed the 17th of October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Since then, governments, local authorities, members of civil society and the private sector have recognized the importance of this International Day, which has become a key rallying point for a growing number of citizens and organizations from all backgrounds, in the fight to eradicate extreme poverty.