

PRESS RELEASE – Worldwide Growth Delivers SPAR International Retail Sales Of €33 Billion For 2015

- 3.5% increase on 2014 represents strongest sales growth in five years
- European market growth a key contributor
- Entry into 4 new countries in 2015 in Asia, Africa and Middle East
- 12,100 Stores in 42 countries worldwide serving 13 million customers a day

AMSTERDAM, 11th APRIL 2016: SPAR International, the world's largest voluntary retail chain, has today announced global retail sales for the year ending December 31, 2015 of €33 billion, representing a 3.5% increase on 2014.

Growth in 2015, the strongest in five years, was characterised by the growing pace of recovery in Europe, in addition to the continuing expansion of the SPAR brand in emerging markets. Growth for the brand was particularly strong in Africa and SPAR continued to grow its presence by entering into four new countries on four continents during the year including store openings in Indonesia, Cameroon, Oman and Azerbaijan.

Commenting on the 2015 results, SPAR International Managing Director Tobias Wasmuht said, "The 2015 figures show the continuing strength and attractiveness of the SPAR brand globally. With a presence now in 42 markets around the world, SPAR continues to be the partner of choice for independent retail partners keen to embrace retail best practice and fast-track their development in the face of international competition.

"The continuing growth of the brand in new and emerging markets in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, as well as the quickening pace of recovery in many of our traditional European markets, is testament to both the adaptability of the SPAR brand and the entrepreneurial drive of our retail partners. The last five years has seen SPAR continue to grow despite volatile international economic conditions. This sustained growth has been achieved by meeting the needs of the local communities we serve with a commitment to deliver excellence in fresh, a passion for quality and best in class customer service. It is very pleasing to see this focus and investment paying dividends."

Performance highlights for 2015 included:

- **Europe:** Recovery in traditional European markets has gathered pace with strong retail sales growth reported by SPAR Austria +2.4%, SPAR Belgium +6% and SPAR Hungary +2.9%. SPAR UK increased store numbers to over 2,600 with turnover up 2% to GBP £2.6 billion.
- **Central & Eastern Europe:** Central & Eastern European markets showed strong growth with SPAR Croatia +15% and SPAR Poland +17%, with both adding significantly to their store footprint. SPAR Russia reported a 19.2% increase in local currency.
- **Asia:** Significant developments in Asia with entry into the Indonesian retail market in partnership with Ramayana – opening 15 stores in 9 months. Continuing growth for SPAR China which reported sales up 6.8% to €1.9 billion and, following re-entry into the market in 2014, the rapid growth of SPAR India.
- **Africa:** SPAR now has a presence in 12 African markets accounting for 17% of SPAR's global retail turnover. SPAR South Africa continues to perform strongly, up 18%, with significant potential for growth shown in Nigeria and Namibia.

- **Middle East:** SPAR strengthened its presence in the Middle East by opening its first stores in Oman, in partnership with Khimji Ramdas, and expanding to 13 stores in the UAE.

Commenting on the outlook for the year ahead Tobias Wasmuht said, “With recovery in Europe continuing and considerable untapped potential in many emerging markets we see significant potential for future growth – both short term and long term. As part of our future strategy we shall continue to drive forward into significant new and high potential markets during 2016, having already in place partnerships that will see the SPAR brand grow in Asia and Africa in the second half of the year”.

SPAR International’s multi-format strategy sees its Partners operate over 12,100 hypermarket, supermarket, neighbourhood and convenience stores serving the needs of 13 million customers daily.

Mathew Hartley
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