

## PRESS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

21 June 2010

### CHIEF EXECUTIVES WORLDWIDE SUPPORT WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

#### Making Equality a Corporate Priority

**New York** — The [United Nations Development Fund for Women](#) (UNIFEM) and the [United Nations Global Compact](#) today announce the [39 lead signers of the CEO Statement of Support](#) for the [Women's Empowerment Principles – Equality Means Business](#), which were launched at the UN on 8 March 2010. Chief executives expressing their commitment to advancing equality between men and women, the cornerstone of the seven Women's Empowerment Principles, come from all regions of the world and represent diverse global and national companies. They include: Accenture, Global; Açovisa Indústria e Comércio De Aços Especiais Ltda., Brazil; Aitken Spence PLC, Sri Lanka; Alcatel-Lucent, France; Avon Products, Inc., Global; Cairo Scientific, Egypt; Calvert Group, Ltd., US; Carlson, US; Carnival Australia, Australia; C.I.D. (Chemical Industries Development), Egypt; CINO Technologies, Brazil; Copel – Companhia Paranaense de Energia, Brazil; Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Global; Endesa, S.A., Spain; Ernst & Young, Global; Eskom Holdings Limited, South Africa; Fersol Industria e Comercio S.A., Brazil; Heidrick & Struggles, US; INCCATI Sistemas Ltda., Brazil; Infosys Technologies Limited, India; Itaipu Binacional, Brazil; Levi Strauss & Co., Global; MicroLife Informática de Franca Ltda., Brazil; NATUSFRAN, Brazil; New Space Processamento e Sistemas Ltda., Brazil; Novartis International AG, Switzerland; Olympic Group, Egypt; OMV Aktiengesellschaft, Austria; Orascom Telecom Holding S.A.E., Egypt; Pax World Management LLC, US; Petrobras, Brazil; Rodovalho Advogados, Brazil; SEKEM Group, Egypt; Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology (Pvt) Ltd., Sri Lanka; Sungjoo Group/MCM, South Korea; Symantec Corporation, US; Total, France; The Westpac Group, Australia; and Yves Saint Laurent, Global.

UNIFEM Executive Director Inés Alberdi said: "These initial signers of the CEO Statement are practicing the very first Women's Empowerment Principle that leadership promotes gender equality. These executives are affirming the high-level support necessary for the Women's Empowerment Principles to gain traction in individual companies and their cultures."

The CEO Statement of Support encourages business leaders to use the seven Women's Empowerment Principles as guide posts for actions that advance and empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community, and communicate progress through the use of sex-disaggregated data and other benchmarks. Signers underscore that equal treatment of women and men is not just the right thing to do — it is also good for business and needs to be a priority. The Principles offer a practical approach to advance women and point the way to a business and social environment that is both fairer and more prosperous for everyone.



United Nations Global Compact



President and CEO of Levi Strauss & Co. John Anderson said: "As one of the first companies to sign onto the CEO Statement of Support for the Women's Empowerment Principles, we remain dedicated to the advancement of women globally. Women comprise a significant portion of apparel sector workers. By investing in access to proper health care, a safe, non-discriminatory work environment and opportunities for asset building targeted to women, we're not only investing in our workers, we're investing in a healthy and sustainable workplace for all.

More than ten [CEOs sent statements](#) supporting their commitment to the Women's Empowerment Principles, in addition to adding their signature to the CEO Letter of Support.

A [partnership](#) initiative of UNIFEM and the UN Global Compact, the *Women's Empowerment Principles – Equality Means Business*, offers the business community a new tool to work with the United Nations to advance the Millennium Development Goals, particularly Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. A high-level private sector forum will be held in New York to coincide with the UN's 2010 September Summit on the Millennium Development Goals.

Today's leading signatories urge other leaders across the global business community to join them, a call that will be broadly made at the upcoming [UN Global Compact Leaders Summit](#) on 24–25 June, when more than 1,000 CEOs, ministers, heads of civil society and the UN will convene in New York to discuss how to build a new era of sustainability — an era where environmental, social and governance issues are deeply integrated into business based on both material and ethical rationales.

Women continue to be vastly under-represented in top positions and on boards — their numbers have been increasing only very slowly over the last decade. To move the dial, Women's Empowerment Principle 1 urges company leaders to make gender equality a top priority.

### **About the United Nations Development Fund for Women**

UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality. Placing the advancement of women's human rights at the centre of all its efforts, UNIFEM focuses on reducing feminised poverty, ending violence against women, reversing the spread of HIV and AIDS among women and girls, and achieving gender equality in democratic governance in times of peace as well as war. [www.unifem.org](http://www.unifem.org)

### **About the United Nations Global Compact**

Launched in 2000, the United Nations Global Compact is a call to companies around the world to align their strategies and operations with ten universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of broader UN goals. Through the development, implementation, and disclosure of responsible corporate policies and practices, business can help ensure that markets advance in ways that benefit economies and societies everywhere. The Global Compact is not a regulatory body, but a voluntary leadership platform for dialogue and learning. With more than 8,200 signatories in more than 135 countries, it is the world's largest corporate responsibility initiative. [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)

The Women's Empowerment Principles, the product of a collaboration between UNIFEM and the UN Global Compact informed by an international multi-stakeholder consultation, are adapted from the Calvert Women's Principles®. The Calvert Women's Principles were originally developed in partnership with UNIFEM and launched in 2004 as the first global corporate code of conduct focused exclusively on empowering, advancing and investing in women worldwide.



**United Nations** Global Compact

