THE SUTEKS GROUP AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES INITIATIVE KICK OFF PARTNERSHIP TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY

Nur Ger, industrialist and the founder of SUTEKS, signed a partnership agreement with UN Global Compact, the world’s largest corporate sustainability initiative, to advocate for equality between women and men. With this partnership, Nur Ger has re-affirmed SUTEKS’s commitment to advance the Women’s Empowerment Principles, a joint initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact that offers guidance to businesses on how to empower women and advance equality in the workplace, marketplace and community.

(10 July 2015, Istanbul) SUTEKS and the UN Global Compact, the world’s largest corporate sustainability initiative, signed a partnership agreement today joining forces to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community. Through the partnership, SUTEKS will help advocate for more private sector companies to sign and implement the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs), a joint initiative of the UN Global Compact (UNGC) and UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The WEPs offers guidance to businesses on how to empower women and advance equality in the workplace, marketplace and community.

The partnership signing ceremony was attended by the UN Global Compact’s Chief of Social Sustainability, Ursula Wynhoven; UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia and Representative to Turkey, Ingibjörg Gísladóttir; and Ms. Nur Ger, the CEO of SUTEKS. With this partnership, Ms. Nur Ger of SUTEKS has re-affirmed her commitment to implement the WEPs and has also committed to provide financial support to the WEPs initiative at the global level for the duration of three years.

Subtitled Equality Means Business, the 7 Principles, developed from real-life business practice, are designed to support companies in reviewing existing
policies and practices—or establishing new ones—to realize women’s empowerment and strengthen business' role in sustainable development. To date, more than 1,000 business leaders from around the world have signed the CEO Statement of Support for the WEPs. Global Compact Local Networks, in collaboration with UN Women local offices and other partners, play a critical role in driving uptake of the Principles.

In addition to implementing the WEPs within her own company, Nur Ger is also dedicated to helping the initiative grow. Among other things, Nur Ger has made a three-year commitment to help grow the reach and impact of the WEPs initiative globally. She will be making the donation based on proceeds of sales of the Braez clothing, a Netherlands based SUTEKS subsidiary company which has endorsed the seven principles of the WEPs, to support outreach and programmatic activities related to the initiative. Nur Ger is also dedicated to ensuring that the WEPs have maximum impact in Turkey. Ms. Ger intends to dedicate more time and resources to scale-up WEPs activities by mobilizing businesses and helping them mainstream gender equality into corporate sustainability.

“During the past 20 years, we made a difference in Turkey and in the world, thanks to our particular understanding of governance based on gender equality. As a result of these efforts, in 2011 we became the first Turkish SME to sign UN WEPs and in 2013 received the honor roll designation by the UN WEPs Leadership Group. This memorandum of understanding is a sign of our intention to bring our commitment to WEPs a step further,” said Nur Ger, SUTEKS Group’s President.

Ingibjorg Gisladottir, UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia and Representative to Turkey welcomed Nur Ger’s initiative. “Women’s empowerment is essential for economic growth and for progress in all spheres of life. So I applaud the initiative by Nur Ger to support the WEPs and her commitment to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment among businesses. For UN Women, WEPs offer a platform to build strong partnerships with the private sector to advance equality between women and men and empower women in the economic life. We will continue our work with UN Global Compact and WEPs signatory companies to achieve this goal.”

Ursula Wynhoven, UN Global Compact Chief of Social Sustainability also welcomed the initiative and commitment of Nur Ger to support the UN Women/UN Global Compact Women’s Empowerment Principles and to promote them to new audiences through this collaboration. “It sets an innovative example for how businesses can be champions for gender equality. We encourage other companies large and small to join Ms. Ger and the more than 1,000 CEOs from across the globe that have stepped up to sign the CEO Statement of support for the WEPs, setting their companies more firmly on the path towards gender equality.
About WEPs

The Women's Empowerment Principles – *Equality Means Business* is a joint initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact. The Principles outline seven steps for business on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. The Principles highlight that empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity is essential to build strong economies; establish more stable and just societies; achieve internationally agreed goals for development, sustainability, and human rights; improve quality of life for women, men, families and communities; and propel business' operations and goals. Learn more at [www.weprinciples.org](http://www.weprinciples.org).

WEPs have more than 1,000 signatories worldwide. Currently in Turkey, there are 49 WEPs signatories, making Turkey the top 5th country among 56 countries that have launched the WEPs in terms of the number of signatories. Out of the 49 signatories, 12 are small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

To join the WEPs platform,

1. The CEO of the company must sign the CEO Statement of Support for the WEPs, and

2. The application must be made online (http://weprinciples.org/) this letter must be uploaded to the website.

To learn more about the Women’s Empowerment Principles, please contact Global Compact Türkiye at [sekreteryaa@globalcompactturkiye.org](mailto:sekreteryaa@globalcompactturkiye.org)

About SUTEKS

SUTEKS is an Istanbul based high-end international fashion producer founded in 1986 that is working mainly with partners in Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Sweden and the U.S.A through boutique chains, designers, brands and fashion retailers. Founded by prominent business executive and gender equality advocate Ms. Nur Ger, the company has established a customer base of 600,000 around the world annually. SUTEKS is also the first medium sized company in Turkey to join the Women's Empowerment Principles (2012) and was awarded by the Turkish Ministry of Labour and Social Security as a best practice in the category of "Social Gender Equality in Work Life" the subsequent year. In 2013, as the Founder and President of SUTEKS, Ms. Ger received an honor roll designation by the WEPs Leadership Group. The company continues to grow based on notion to exceed the dreams of the clients, customers, collaborators, investors and employees while never compromising core values and ethics based on the pillars of humanity, creativity, teamwork, professionalism and reliability.
Furthermore, given the labour intensive aspect of the fashion industry, SUTEKs has integrated labour and human rights policies in it's core business and is committed to advance the up-taking of the principles around the world.

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