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For immediate release:

Industry giants join forces on first-ever *CEO Agenda* for a sustainable fashion industry

The sustainability-centred *CEO Agenda* is a guide to what every fashion CEO needs to prioritise in order to future-proof their company – because sustainability is no longer just a trend, it’s a business imperative.

Today, 27 March 2018, Global Fashion Agenda proudly releases the first-ever *CEO Agenda* for the fashion industry, which spells out the seven most crucial sustainability priorities for fashion CEOs in 2018.

Developed in collaboration with leading fashion players such as Kering, H&M, Target, BESTSELLER, Li & Fung and Sustainable Apparel Coalition, and building on the *Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2017* report co-authored by Global Fashion Agenda and The Boston Consulting Group, this historic first edition of the *CEO Agenda* offers clear guidance for company executives on where to focus their sustainability efforts.

Eva Kruse, CEO of Global Fashion Agenda, says:

“It’s the first time in history that key players from the industry have joined forces to discuss – and agree on – what to prioritise to improve the industry’s environmental and social footprint. It takes a coordinated effort to move the needle on sustainability, which is why this agenda for a common industry focus holds the potential to be a major breakthrough.”

The case for change

Employing 60 million people worldwide, the fashion industry generates EUR 1.5 trillion in global revenue (apparel and footwear), but that value is at risk if no action is taken. In fact, projections from the *Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2017* report show that fashion brands will see a decline in EBIT margins of more than three percentage points if they continue business as usual.

Kruse comments:

“Fashion is one of the largest industries in the world, but also one of the most resource and labour intensive. The environmental, social and ethical challenges the industry faces today are not only a threat to the planet, but also a threat to the industry itself. That’s why there’s no alternative but for sustainability to become an integral part of any company’s business strategy.”

What’s on the agenda?

The *CEO Agenda 2018* spells out seven priorities that should be top of mind for any CEO in fashion right now.

Three priorities for immediate implementation

- Supply chain traceability
- Efficient use of water, energy and chemicals
- Respectful and secure work environments

Four transformational priorities for fundamental change in the long run

- Sustainable material mix
- Closed-loop fashion system
- Promotion of better wage systems
- Fourth industrial revolution

Since sustainability is a strategic issue that requires top-level engagement, fashion brand CEOs are the primary target audience of the *CEO Agenda*. They hold the power to make sustainability an integral part of their business strategy, and hence to lead the transformation of not only their own company but also the entire industry.

Read the 2018 edition of the [CEO Agenda](#).

A word from leading fashion players

Karl-Johan Persson, CEO, H&M

“The big challenges facing the world can only be tackled by working together. This is a prerequisite for making the fashion industry part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Our collaborative mindset has, for example, helped us when setting the ambitious goal to become climate positive by 2040. This means we’ll go beyond minimising the negative consequences of our business to create a positive impact on the planet. But no matter if the challenges are about recycling innovation, new sustainable materials or working conditions for the people making our clothes, our collaboration with others is key to make lasting change.”

Amanda Nusz, VP and General Merchandise Manager, Target

“At Target we know that the decisions we make have the potential to impact millions of people around the world, including the people who create our products and the communities where they live. We build responsible practices into our sourcing operations – including public commitments to improving worker well-being, manufacturing in a way that enhances the environment and increasing our use of sustainable raw materials – and have a longstanding commitment to transparency within our supply chain. As a Strategic Partner of the Global Fashion Agenda, we wholeheartedly support the priorities laid out in the *CEO Agenda* and are proud to join with other industry leaders to help tackle some of the fashion industry’s most important challenges together.”

Dorthe Scherling Nielsen, Head of Corporate Affairs, BESTSELLER

“We consider the *CEO Agenda* an important initiative and driver for addressing challenges and opportunities collectively as an industry, as well as to inspire individual companies to take action. Working with the other Strategic Partners to provide input on the agenda has been a valuable and insightful journey, and we’ll apply many of the insights as we develop our new strategy framework for BESTSELLER.”

Background

Global Fashion Agenda, in collaboration with The Boston Consulting Group, published the *Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2017* report last year. One of its main findings was that even though most fashion industry executives acknowledged the importance of sustainability, half of the industry had not yet taken any action and was hesitant about doing so. As a result, we started reaching out to the industry in the ensuing months to find out why. What we heard most frequently was some variety of “We acknowledge the need to take action, but we are awed by the magnitude and complexity of the challenge”. In other words, there was a clear request for guidance and a joint industry focus.

We sat down with our Strategic Partners and select experts to define the top priorities for the fashion industry in terms of sustainability. The result of our discussions is the *CEO Agenda 2018*.

The *CEO Agenda 2018*, which will be explored further in the upcoming *Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2018* report, also serves as a guiding framework for the programme of Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2018, to take place on 15-16 May.

Contributors

We thank Kering, H&M, Target, BESTSELLER, Li & Fung and Sustainable Apparel Coalition for contributing their time and expertise to the development of the *CEO Agenda*. In addition, we thank our sounding board, the industry experts and the company executives who have contributed their time and insight.

The *CEO Agenda* reflects a shared belief by Global Fashion Agenda and its Strategic Partners that the seven priorities are currently the most important challenges for the industry to tackle together. It does not represent a commitment by the Strategic Partners to solve the issues within a given timeframe, but to support the dialogue in the industry to move in this direction.

About Global Fashion Agenda

Global Fashion Agenda is a leadership forum on fashion sustainability. Anchored around the world's leading business event on sustainability in fashion, Copenhagen Fashion Summit, Global Fashion Agenda advances a year-round mission to mobilise the global fashion system to change the way we produce, market and consume fashion, for a world beyond next season. A non-profit initiative, Global Fashion Agenda collaborates with a group of Strategic Partners including Kering, H&M, Target, BESTSELLER, Li & Fung and Sustainable Apparel Coalition on setting a common agenda for focused industry efforts on sustainability in fashion.

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