

Paris, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008

## GLOBAL SOCIAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAMME

**“On the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, global companies are working in partnership to address the challenge of social justice in the supply chain.”**

On December 10th, 1948, an agreement between the world’s nations was signed in Paris. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights would become the most translated document ever. Sixty years on, the challenge to uphold human rights persists. The reality of the global workplace is that problems are pervasive.

As corporate strategy undergoes a global rethink following the turmoil in the financial markets, the emergence of the Global Social Compliance Programme as a partnership of some of the world’s biggest companies represents a positive development for the workers.

Looking at the manufacture of all consumer goods, the Programme represents the most significant business alliance for social justice yet seen, not just because it is practical and inclusive but also because it has strong CEO support.

The partnership includes (amongst many others) Carrefour, Hasbro, Ikea, Hewlett-Packard, Metro, Migros, Tesco and Wal-mart.

Today, the Board of GSCP, meeting in Hong Kong, have released the [Reference Code](#). It is the first of a series of reference tools that will help companies and existing initiatives work together to deliver a common message and reduce duplication and confusion.

The [Reference Code](#) describes best practice and relies on international conventions and guidelines from which it sets generic requirements. It has full support from the Advisory Board of the GSCP, with members from the United Nations, the International Federation of Human Rights, the Global Union Network and CSR Asia.

Long-term and genuine change, beyond the mission statement, is best served when stakeholders and business get together in constructive dialogue. This challenge is not industry or country specific. It applies equally to all who buy and sell goods. International organisations, governments, trade unions, NGOs, and consumers are all in support of a new business model.

Amir Dossal, Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Partnerships and a member of the GSCP Advisory Board, said:

*"GSCP provides a unique forum for the public, private and non-governmental sectors to work together and devise lasting solutions to the world's pressing issues. It will ultimately help improve the lives of many people around the world."*

Speaking from a GSCP Board meeting in Hong Kong, the GSCP Chairman, Terry Babbs from Tesco, said *“On this day, we recognise and share the global challenge set by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our*

*businesses together touch millions of people either directly through our customers and employees or indirectly through hundreds of millions of workers in our supply chain. We are aware of the challenges around human rights, social standards and compliance in our supplier companies. In response we have joined together in an attempt to deliver a shared, global and sustainable approach for the improvement of working conditions in the global supply chain.”*

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*Note : Chris will be available for Europe and US time zones*

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