

**United Nations Global Compact
Sustainable Business in the MENA Region
Roundtable Discussion
Shangri-La Hotel
Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai, UAE
1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., 15 April 2015**

BACKGROUND

The UN Global Compact

The United Nations Global Compact is a strategic policy initiative for businesses that are committed to aligning their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. With over 8,000 corporate participants and 4,000 other stakeholders, it is the largest voluntary corporate responsibility platform in the world centred on learning, collective action and policy dialogue.

The UN Global Compact works toward the vision of a sustainable and inclusive global economy which delivers lasting benefits to people, communities, and markets. To help realize this vision, the initiative seeks to (1) Mainstream the Global Compact's ten principles in business strategy and operations around the world, and (2) Catalyze business action in support of UN goals and issues, with emphasis on collaboration and collective action.

The UN Global Compact seeks to make corporate sustainability a transformative force across the globe in achieving a shared, secure and sustainable future. Since 2000, the groundwork has steadily been laid by the Global Compact and partners to build and make the case for corporate sustainability globally. Today, the Global Compact counts with over **480 corporate signatories and other stakeholders** from the MENA region. The Global Compact invites companies and other organisations in the region to advance their corporate sustainability agenda by joining the initiative and internalizing the ten principles into daily operations and strategies.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

The *UN Global Compact Roundtable Discussion on Sustainable Business in the MENA Region* has the following objectives:

1. Introduce the Global Compact and its relevance in the Middle East and North Africa
2. Mobilize greater numbers of business leaders in the region in support of the United Nations Global Compact
3. Enable a discussion on companies' approach in the region to integrating sustainability into daily operations and the challenges and opportunities businesses encounter throughout their journey



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AGENDA

13.00-14.00	Registration and Networking Lunch
14.00-14.15	Welcoming Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walid Nagi, Head, Local Networks, United Nations Global Compact • Imelda Dunlop, Executive Director, Pearl Initiative
14.15-14.50	The Corporate Sustainability Landscape in the MENA region <p><i>This presentation will serve to lay out the corporate sustainability landscape as it has evolved in the MENA region with a particular focus on the Gulf. It will highlight key corporate sustainability trends and priorities within the region and identify opportunities as well as gaps.</i></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeannette Vinke, Senior Lecturer of Accounting and Finance, American University of Sharjah • Ibrahim Al-Zu'bi, Senior Sustainability Advisor, Real Estate Investment Management & Promotion Center, Land Department
14.50-15.00	Introduction to the UN Global Compact <p><i>This session will provide an overview on the UN Global Compact and the engagement opportunities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandra Tarazi, Relationship Manager-MENA and Europe, United Nations Global Compact
15.00-15.45	Roundtable Discussion: Sustainable Business in the MENA Region <p><i>Markets are essential for creating and diffusing solutions that will drive the changes our world needs. But, this will not happen through business as usual. Investment and business activity must be sustainable – delivering value not just financially, but also in social, environmental and ethical terms. The Roundtable Discussion will give participants the opportunity to share regional experiences in integrating sustainability into daily operations and the challenges and opportunities businesses encounter throughout their journey. Participants will be divided into Roundtable breakout groups with a Global Compact participant as facilitator who will provide insight on their approach to sustainability and facilitate the discussion.</i></p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imelda Dunlop, Executive Director, Pearl Initiative <p>Facilitators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrea Forabosco, Head of Legal Department, Petroleum Development Oman • Alice Laughher, Chief Executive Officer, CTG Global • Ayla Bajwa, CSR Manager, Chalhoub Group • Muhrah Al Khuzaim, Supervisor, King Khalid Award Affairs, King Khalid Foundation • Nicole Malick, CSR Manager, NRS International Group FZCO



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sveccha Kumar, Manager Corporate Sustainability, Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Company PJSC <p><i>To help facilitate dialogue, below are some discussion questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What enabling factors can encourage the private sector to incorporate corporate sustainability into their company's DNA? • What are the main challenges that companies face in the MENA region in integrating sustainability? • Much of the private sector in the Middle East is comprised of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and family businesses. How can these companies advance sustainability with limited resources in the region? • How can the private sector in the Middle East contribute to more inclusive growth, particularly for young people and the empowerment of women?
15.45-16.30	<p>Roundtable Discussion: Report Back</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imelda Dunlop, Executive Director, Pearl Initiative <p><i>Each rapporteur from a Roundtable will deliver the key discussion points from the group Roundtable discussion.</i></p>
16.30	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walid Nagi, Head, Local Networks, United Nations Global Compact • Mahmoud Al Burai, Managing Director, Dubai Real Estate Institute