

STOCK EXCHANGES AROUND THE WORLD RANG THE BELL FOR GENDER EQUALITY

2015 EVENT SUMMARY



In the lead up to International Women’s Day 2015, stock exchanges around the world joined the [UN Global Compact](#), the [Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative](#), and [UN Women](#) to ring the bell for gender equality and the Women’s Empowerment Principles. The events brought together business leaders, investors, Government and UN officials to highlight the pivotal role of the private sector in empowering women in the workplace, marketplace and community and how market actors can take steps to raise awareness about gender equality.

Fiona Reynolds, Managing Director of PRI noted: “Gender equality is an issue that impacts everyone, from diversity

in board rooms to equal opportunities for education. We have come far, but we have so much further to go,” she said. “PRI welcomes the leadership taken by the exchanges, business representatives and UN officials who brought together these global bell ringing events and calls on all capital market actors to take their own steps toward gender equality.”

Organized by [Global Compact Local Networks](#), UN Regional and Country Offices and Stock Exchange partners, the series of global bell ringings began in Egypt on 2 March and the sound traveled to Nigeria, Poland, Sweden, Turkey and India, and culminated on 9 March with a bell ringing at NASDAQ in New York City. In parallel, NYSE also hosted two bell ceremonies to bring attention to this important issue, with one hosted by Citi and one with Women in ETFs.

“From Bombay to New York, bells are ringing for gender equality,” said Georg Kell, Executive Director, UN Global Compact. “As an organizer of both the WEPs and the SSE initiative, the UN Global Compact is encouraged to see exchanges, companies, investors, Governments and the UN coming together to take on this critical issue of gender equality. If we are to ensure women’s full and effective participation, and equal opportunity at all levels of political, economic and public life, we need the full commitment and collaboration of all stakeholders.”

From the political to economic spheres, progress has been made, but not enough. Investing in women and girls, and enabling their full economic participation is important for business and society to build strong economies and more stable and just societies, improve the quality of life for families and communities, and achieving sustainable development.

The Women’s Empowerment Principles, a joint initiative of UN Global Compact and UN Women, provide guidance to business on how to advance women’s empowerment and embed gender equality throughout corporate responsibility and sustainable development efforts.

Quotes from Around the World

Egypt: 2 March 2015 The Egyptian Exchange Rang the Opening Bell for Gender Equality

Dr. Mohammed Omran, Chairman of the Egyptian Exchange stated that the Egyptian Exchange has a clear interest in empowering women to play leading roles in the Egyptian capital market system, adding “...the private sector plays an essential and pivotal role in supporting women’s economic empowerment all around the world. You could act as a leading entity to change the wage gap, ensure equality in the workplace and to support women as leaders in the business sector”. Read press release [here](#).



Poland: 3 March 2015 The Warsaw Stock Exchange Rang the Closing Bell for Gender Equality

“GPW (Warsaw Stock Exchange) sees its role in the creation of standards of conduct. In the document ‘Best Practices of GPW Listed Companies’ we included recommendations for public companies and their shareholders concerned with ensuring balanced participation of women in the companies’ authorities. We also treat the issue of equality between women and men in business sector as part of responsible business.

Companies that pay attention to these issues, among others, are likely to be included in the RESPECT Index – our prestigious index of responsible companies” says **Paweł Tamborski, President of the Management Board of GPW**. Watch the video [here](#).



Turkey: 6 March 2015 Borsa İstanbul Rang the Opening Bell for Gender Equality

Borsa İstanbul Acting CEO Hüseyin Zafer said in his speech, “While the government offers the required infrastructure for economic growth and development through education policies, labor laws and other similar steps, companies should, through their human resources policies, take the necessary steps to reinforce gender equality in Turkey. Taking an active role in efforts related to education, sustainability and social responsibility efforts, Borsa İstanbul will continue to support every project that brings forth equality of opportunity for women, in cooperation with its stakeholders. We will continue to contribute to

reinforce the awareness on the side of companies and investors.” Read the press release [here](#).

Nigeria: 6 March 2015 The Nigerian Stock Exchange Rang the Closing Bell for Gender Equality

In his opening remarks, the Executive Director, Business Development, Nigerian Stock Exchange, Haruna Jalo-Waziri, remarked that, “achieving gender equality is important for workplaces not only because it is fair and the right thing to do, it is also vitally important to the bottom line of a business and to the productivity of our nation”. He noted that “the private sector plays an essential and pivotal role in supporting women’s economic empowerment all around the world. At The Nigerian Stock Exchange we are making it happen, as we have women filling 32% of the workforce and we are still working at improving that figure.”



Sweden: 6 March 2015 OMX Stockholm (part of NASDAQ Group) Rang the Opening Bell for Gender Equality

Katarina Lindahl, Chairperson for UN Women Sweden opened the event by stating “that the business sector, and not only civil society, needs to take responsibility for increasing women’s economic and political participation” and called for companies to strengthen their efforts to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment. Read the press release [here](#).

India: 9 March 2015 The Bombay Stock Exchange Rang the Opening Bell for Gender Equality

Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD & CEO of Bombay Stock Exchange said, “BSE is pleased to associate with the UN Women initiative in this regard. Gender equality is a very important issue especially for a developing country like India. Working in this area to provide dignity and skills to women and recognizing successful role models is important to improve gender equality. BSE is honored to be associated with the ringing of the bell at various exchanges on International Women’s Day.” Read the press release [here](#).



United States of America: 9 March 2015 NASDAQ Rang the Opening Bell for Gender Equality

Cathy Engelbert, CEO-elect of Deloitte LLP rang the opening bell at NASDAQ in New York, remarking, “It is an honor and privilege to ring the opening bell at the NASDAQ for International Women’s Day. Not only did Deloitte contribute to the development of the seven Women’s Empowerment Principles, we’ve integrated them into our business as part of our commitment to promote gender equality worldwide.” Read the press release [here](#).

About the Partners

The Women's Empowerment Principles

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.

The United Nations Global Compact

The United Nations Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to voluntarily align their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of UN goals and issues. The UN Global Compact is a leadership platform for the development, implementation and disclosure of responsible corporate policies and practices. Launched in 2000, it is the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world, with over 8,000 companies and 4,000 non-business signatories based in 160 countries. www.unglobalcompact.org.

The Sustainable Stock Exchanges (SSE) initiative

The Sustainable Stock Exchanges (SSE) initiative is a peer-to-peer learning platform for exploring how exchanges, in collaboration with investors, regulators, and companies, can enhance corporate transparency – and ultimately performance – on ESG (environmental, social and corporate governance) issues and encourage sustainable investment. The SSE initiative is co-convened by four organisations – the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), United Nations Global Compact and UN-supported Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI). The SSE initiative invites exchanges globally to become a Partner Stock Exchange within the SSE by making a voluntary public commitment to promote improved ESG transparency and performance among listed companies. Currently, the SSE welcomes 18 exchanges globally as Partner Exchanges. In addition, the SSE welcomes participation from securities regulators, investors, companies and other key stakeholders to engage with the initiative. To learn more, visit www.sseinitiative.org

UN Women

UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide. UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.