

# Communication on Progress UN Global Compact

**AIAYU ApS  
Denmark**

**November 2012**

## **Statement of Continued Support**

AIAYU ApS, incorporated in Denmark, was established in 2006 with the specific purpose of creating a luxury fashion brand where high quality and fashionable design from the outset would go hand in hand with a high ethical standard.

Our collections are based on the little known llama fibres from Bolivia and we have chosen to have our yarns and finished garments produced at the source of the fibres, at 4000 meters altitude in a factory with which we have entered into a long term partnership, so that the poor people of Bolivia get as large a share of the value adding activities as possible. Bolivia and its people are one of the poorest in the world and a place that few international firms chose to source manufactured products from. It is our ambition that our choice will help push this people out of poverty.

Our vision is to:

1. make llama yarn and finished garments from the poor country of Bolivia a sought after luxury so that the poor indigenous people in the highland of Bolivia get a better and bigger market for the llama fibres and more job opportunities in processing of the fibres into finished garments,
2. help our main yarn and finished garment manufacturer in Bolivia understand the importance of the 10 principles of the Global Compact and help them change their entire company to fulfil the principles so that the people working in our supply chain receives the respect and conditions they deserve as human beings in this world,
3. make the western world's luxury fashion consumers and dealers feel a common destiny with the people that produce the garments they wear.

It was natural for us to commit to the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact and to promote and advance them in all our activities.

We hereby state our continued commitment to and support for the UN Global Compact and its 10 principles. We will continue to strive towards meeting the principles ourselves and making our suppliers meet the principles too.

For AIAYU ApS

Copenhagen, 26 November 2012



Maria Høgh Heilmann  
CEO, Founder & Owner

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### **Human Rights Principles**

*Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and*

*Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses*

### **Labour Principles**

*Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;*

*Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;*

*Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and*

*Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation*

### **Assessment, Policy and Goals**

Focus on the principles 1 to 6 is mostly relevant for our suppliers. This not to say that the principles 1 to 6 are not important to our internal operations, on the contrary it is very basic fundamentals for our operations. However, we are based in Denmark where rules and regulations effectively make it impossible not to follow the principles, except for principle 6. This principle we work with by having a no discrimination policy.

Our main supplier is based in Bolivia where, although there are local laws, these principles unfortunately cannot be taken for granted.

Instead of demanding that all our suppliers shall meet the principles before buying from them, it is our strategy to use our buying power to get suppliers to **change their way of operating** and their mindset so that they over a reasonable time change from not living up to the principles to living up to the principles. This way we help make improvements for people whose working conditions are not acceptable from the outset.

Suppliers must either be working with a clear plan on getting credible CSR certification, already have a credible CSR certification or otherwise have very convincing operation.

### **Implementation**

We have one main supplier in Bolivia who supplies 95% of our products. We have worked with this supplier since the start of the company and – contrary to what is usual in the fashion industry – we don't plan to shift supplier whenever a new supplier offers cheaper prices. We have secured funding from the Danish Development Organisation, DANIDA, to implement a broad range of improvements within principle 1 to 6, including occupational health and safety, and the supplier is working dedicated towards getting SA8000 certified. SA8000 is one of the leading independent CSR certification systems, which encompass principles 1 to 6.

We have the foregoing year taken a minor ownership share in the knitting division of our main supplier and together received further funding for expanding the production capacity and continue the work towards SA8000 certification of the knitting division.

Preparations for the SA8000 certification have almost been completed during 2012 and our supplier expects to be granted the SA8000 certificate in 2013 when final audit has been completed by an SA8000 accredited audit firm.

### **Measurement of outcomes**

We monitor the progress of improvements necessary for SA8000 certification. When the SA8000 certification is in place we will ensure that the supplier maintains the certification by passing the annual independent SA8000 inspections.

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### **Environmental Principles**

*Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;*

*Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and*

*Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies*

### **Assessment, Policy and Goals**

The principles 7 to 9 are more relevant for our suppliers as our company itself has no production activities. However, the organisation of our activities from we take delivery of products from our suppliers does have an environmental impact in form of fuel for transportation of goods and packaging material. Our office facility and office supplies also have an environmental impact although minimal. Lastly, our products durability has an impact of how fast a consumer will replace with a new product.

For our own operations we have decided to work towards having goods shipped directly from our supplier to customers in each country instead of taking all goods from Bolivia to Denmark and thereafter to different locations around the world. However, this will only be possible when volumes to various countries increase above its current level. Furthermore, it requires more diligence in quality control and packaging than our supplier has today. These are issues we will be working on during the next years.

To reduce the impact of packaging we have shifted to using biodegradable wrapping for our products.

We strive to make long lasting products. Long lasting in terms of the quality and long lasting in terms of the design. The llama fibres have a superior quality which makes our products very long lasting compared to most other fabrics. In our design we strive to balance new fashion trends with classic in order to come up with designs that are not outdated following season.

As for our main supplier in Bolivia we have engaged them in a plan to improve the environmental impact of their production and our goal is to make it as environmental friendly as possible. The main environmental impact is waste water and energy for heat and power in the production.

The supplier is on other environmental issues already well advanced:

- It uses biodegradable detergent and dyes with as little chemicals as possible. It further has the advantage that llama fibres come in a broad range of natural colours. We strive to always use as many natural colours in our collection as possible as this reduces the use of dyes.
- The factory's main energy source for heating is natural gas which compared to other fossil fuel has a low carbon emission factor. Similar, the Bolivian national power grid emission factor is lower than most countries due to a high degree of natural gas and hydro power. This said, Bolivia's highland, where the factory is located, has high potential for solar heating and power due to high altitude and many hours of sunshine per year. We will in the future look at possibilities for solar heating and power which would reduce the factory's carbon footprint further.

To take a responsible approach to the world's climate challenge we have decided that we will work towards being able to quantify and disclose the carbon footprint of each garment supplied to consumers, in the hope that other fashion firms will do the same so that consumers may be able to factor this into their purchase decision.

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**Implementation**

With support from the Danish Development Organisation, DANIDA, our main supplier in Bolivia has implemented a waste water treatment plant that cleans the waste water before letting it out in the public sewer system. The plant further recycles up to 70% of the water which helps save the water consumption of the factory. Prior to the implementation of waste water plant the factory was not recycling any water and untreated water was let directly into the public sewer system. New water saving toilets has also been installed at the factory.

The water treatment plant was the first of its kind in Bolivia and our supplier has had several companies in Bolivia visiting to view the plant and it is letting the supplier of the plant use it for sales demonstration purposes. Both with the aim of encouraging other companies in Bolivia to protect the environment.

Our supplier has also installed waste containers for solid waste and contracted disposal at the city's official managed and sanitised landfill facility. Prior to this, solid waste was left on the ground and the end destination for disposal was unknown.

Our supplier has during the last years implemented various energy efficiency improvements, which will reduce the carbon footprint further, such as:

- Supply of correct chemicals to add to water before going into boilers so that combustion is minimized and gas consumption is adequate.
- Heat transfer unit have been bought and implemented so the heating system is more efficient in dryer.
- Replacement of old electrical systems and improvement of other.

Further energy efficiency measures are being planned.

**Measurement of outcomes**

We have engaged ourselves extensively in finding out what environmental impact our main supplier has from the manufacturing of our products. We have engaged ourselves in finding funding for the implementation of the solutions and we are personally monitoring the implementation of these.

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