



May, 2005

# **UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT**

**- Communication on Progress -**

William E. Connor & Associates Limited



**a) Statement from the Chief Executive Officer**

“Our position as an international consumer products sourcing agency enables us to promote the 10 principles of the Global Compact to a diverse group of constituents in the global supply chain. The 10 principles mirror the core values of Connor and we will continue to promote their use, both internally and to all of our business partners.”

William E. Connor II  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer



## **Human Rights:**

### **b) Description of practical actions taken to integrate the principles**

#### Principle 1.

Businesses are asked to support and respect the protection of international human rights within their sphere of influence

#### Principle 2.

Make sure their own corporations are not complicit in human rights abuses

- Connor's ethical principles form the cornerstone for our interaction with our clients and business partners. We have developed social compliance programs which promote human rights and corporate social responsibility in every area of the supply chain.
- The Connor Social Compliance Program dictates that every factory which manufactures items for Connor's clients' is subject to a comprehensive social compliance evaluation. To support this program Connor has an wholly independent compliance division with over 50 staff based in 20 countries.
- The Connor factory evaluation is based on Social Accountability International's SA-8000 guidelines and adheres to the highest standards for health, safety, and labor compliance.
- The results of all factory evaluations are shared with our clients.
- Connor has invested heavily in developing IT systems which facilitate the efficient storing of all factory evaluation reports and the analysis of the same. This system enables our clients to view the compliance status of their suppliers online in real-time.

### **c) Measurement of outcomes or expected outcomes**

- Adopting a completely transparent approach to the social compliance of the factories we use has not been easy. However, our clients have a great deal of trust in our management systems now and rely on our program to identify serious violations. As a result we have disqualified numerous suppliers from our sourcing base.
- In the course of 2004 we have evaluated more than 2,500 suppliers throughout the world. The majority of these manufacturers were put on a comprehensive corrective action plan as a result of our findings and we continue to monitor their improvement.



## **Labor:**

### **b) Description of practical actions taken to integrate the principles**

#### Principle 3.

Businesses are asked to 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

#### Principle 6.

The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

- Connor (and all of Connor's clients) promotes freedom of association in all of the countries that it sources by encouraging suppliers to establish mechanisms which allow their employees to participate in collective bargaining. This can be a contentious issue in some locations and our approach will be dictated by the laws of the relevant jurisdiction.
- Connor's comprehensive factory evaluation program incorporates detailed screening of suppliers' employment practices. Key compliance violations (or "zero tolerance" violations as we term them) will trigger the disqualification of a supplier. These include forced labor; child labor; and discrimination.
- We have in place comprehensive corporate "zero tolerance" procedures and systems which ensure that all Connor's offices adhere to these principles.

### **c) Measurement of outcomes or expected outcomes**

- Uncovering unacceptable labor practices has been a key success of our factory evaluation program. As a result we have been able to advise the clients we work with of the conditions in their factories and work with those factories to improve. In 2004 we have evaluated more than 2,500 factories and advised more than 80 key clients of our findings.



## **Environment:**

### **b) Description of practical actions taken to integrate the principles**

Principle 7.

Businesses are asked to support a precautionary approach to environmental changes.

Principle 8.

Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

Principle 9.

Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

- The Connor factory evaluation includes a specific section for the evaluation of a supplier's adherence to local laws with respect to the environment.
- The environmental requirements of many of Connor's clients are increasing and this aspect of our supplier screening will be enhanced in the coming year.
- We are already actively participating in several environmental initiatives including i) the sourcing of organic cotton, ii) the Tropical Forest Trust and sourcing of sustainable timber, and iii) the Forest Stewardship Council

### **c) Measurement of outcomes or expected outcomes**

- As a result of collaboration with a number of our clients we have been able to implement a program for the sourcing of sustainable timber. The program is still being implemented but results so far are encouraging and have meant that some of our existing suppliers are looking at ways to source FSC certified wood, or develop chains of custody in respect of their wood sources.



## **Anti-Corruption:**

### **b) Description of practical actions taken to integrate the principles**

Principle 10.

Business should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

- Connor has introduced a mandatory “Code of Ethics” for all of its employees which must be signed annually.
- Every supplier which wishes to do business with Connor must first sign the “Vendor Compliance Letter” which stipulates what business practices are unacceptable to our organization.
- Together with the “Vendor Compliance Letter” every supplier is sent a copy of Connor’s Code of Ethics.

### **c) Measurement of outcomes or expected outcomes**

- The implementation of our Code of Ethics has lead to both internal and external investigations. We will continue to fully investigate every instance of suspected malpractice with absolute determination.