



**AKLEGAL**

dr Artur Krzykowski

ADWOKACI I RADCOWIE PRAWNI

**PREMIUM LEGAL & TAX COUNSEL**

# **United Nations Global Compact Communication on Progress (COP) November 2020 – November 2021**



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## Statement of continued support

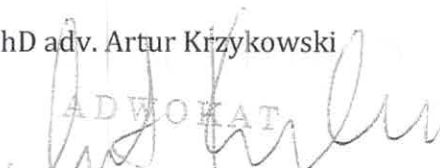
Dear stakeholders,

I am pleased to confirm that AKLEGAL reaffirms its support of the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

In this annual Communication on Progress, we describe our actions to continually improve the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture and daily operations. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Yours faithfully,

PhD adv. Artur Krzykowski

  
ADWOKAT  
*of Artur Krzykowski*

## **Human Rights Principles**

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

Principle 2 and make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Human rights are fundamental to the functioning of democratic societies. As lawyers, we know the importance of these rights and we uphold their observance both in everyday and in professional life.

Due to our profession, we are particularly close to the exercise of the right to defence and the right to a fair trial. Nevertheless, these are not the only human rights that we undertake to defend as part of our profession. In our daily work, we often meet the need to defend human rights, also by explaining to clients why they cannot behave in a given way towards their contractors, clients or third parties. We strongly discourage ideas that cast even the slightest suspicion that they could lead to a violation of human rights.

## **Labour**

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;

Principle 6 and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Labour law is a very important issue for the functioning of AKLEGAL, because we approach it in two ways: an entity appearing on the market with an offer of cooperation, and advising clients in the field of labour law.

As an employer, we create clear recruitment rules, the requirements we set are specific, we describe in detail the scope of duties and expectations towards candidates. As part of the recruitment, we do not ask embarrassing or discriminatory questions. In the final selection of the candidate, we do not follow criteria other than those presented in the

offer. Sex, race, religion, social status etc. are not important to us. This information is irrelevant to us and indifferent to the selection of a candidate.

In our professional work, we deal with various matters, where we represent (or advise) both employees and employers. Recently, we have noticed more and more cases of abusing labour rights by employees and often making unjustified demands against employers, misinterpreting labour law provisions, etc. It is a disturbing phenomenon, which we try to remedy by "educating" our clients, explaining at the beginning of cooperation what their rights are, what they are not entitled to, and what claims they can make. We also prepare newsletters for our clients, in which we discuss key issues in the field of labour law.

In turn, in the case of cooperation with employers, we undertake activities aimed at eliminating practices that could be accused of not complying with the labour law. They uphold decent and safe working conditions, fair wages, non-discriminatory work rules, etc. What is more, our help also appears at such a key moment as termination of the employment relation, which can generate serious disputes between employers and dismissed employees. We develop a plan for the client, according to which we are sure that the employer will legally terminate the contract with the employee, without violating any of rights (e.g. the right to severance pay, holiday allowance).

## **Environment**

- Principle 7    Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- Principle 8    undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;
- Principle 9    and encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Climate change is clearly visible. We strongly oppose the attempt to create a different theory and the negation of human influence on the state of the environment. We are aware that the actions of every human being can improve the climate and bring the desired results. With this in mind, both as part of the functioning as a law office and in private life, we undertake activities aimed at preventing environmental degradation.



As part of the functioning of the law office, we almost completely resigned from plastic packaging - we use reusable vessels. What's more, we have installed a special piping allowing drinking water from the "Oligocene sources". Thus, we gave up the purchase of water in plastic bottles.

We consistently implement the plan to reduce paper consumption. Therefore, we keep digital documentation, printing only those documents that are required by law, decisions of courts or other state authorities, then we use the double-sided printing option to use as few sheets of paper as possible. The coronavirus pandemic and the "stay-at-home" recommendations have helped us to develop an even better and more functional procedure for digitizing and archiving documents. Invariably, we care for the correct segregation of waste, using the method of segregation into five: glass, plastics, bio and mixed. In addition, we cooperate with entities that are also involved in environmental protection. We buy energy-efficient electronic equipment and other environmentally friendly office supplies.

### **Anti-corruption**

Principle 10      Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Corruption, extortion and bribery are situations to which we strongly oppose. Nevertheless, we are aware that this is not an abstract situation and can be encountered at various levels and in various offices, bureaus, etc. The role of modern entrepreneurs, but also lawyers, is to take effective preventive, educational and informational activities in order to minimize the risk occurrence of any of the above situation.

We are currently run a criminal case with an international scope, in which the our client has been the victim of a financial fraud. In this case one of the threads is bribery of bank employees by persons operating within a criminal group, which was to enable criminals to commit a prohibited act to the detriment of the client. It is an extremely complex matter, mainly due to its international nature, as well as the multitude of entities involved in it and also because of the extremely high amount for which the fraud was committed. We sincerely hope that the criminals will be punished with our help and commitment.

As part of the educational function, the AKLegal actively support clients in fulfilling their obligations related to counteracting terrorism and money laundering. First, we prepared an official newsletter that described the new obligations imposed on business entities. What's more, we provide individual legal aid to clients who contact us with a specific problem, and we also provide support, for example, in the matter of sharing information within the Central Register of Beneficial Owners.

## **Measurement of outcomes**

The measurement of outcomes has already been signalled as part of the discussion of the implementation of the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact. Nevertheless, in order to properly present the actual actions taken by AKLEGAL and what results have been achieved, as well as how future plans are shaped, a summary of the information described above will be presented in this section.

### **1. Human Rights Principles**

Currently, we conduct over a dozen court proceedings in which we provide clients with protection of their rights, and we guard the right to defence, the right to a fair trial, and the right to broadly understood justice. What is more, for a dozen or so clients we prepare lawsuits in which we will take actions to defend their rights. Our goals in this respect are set by our clients and the problems they report to us. We declare full readiness and professionalism in the actions taken, aimed at obtaining a fair settlement, favourable to the party to the dispute we represent.

Nevertheless, our overriding goal is the further protection of human rights as well as the transparency and comprehensiveness of the provided services. Moreover, bearing in mind the political and economic changes currently taking place in Poland, we realize that our help as lawyers may be even more desirable and necessary for both individuals and business entities, which we are ready for.

### **2. Labour**

As part of the judicial assistance provided to our clients, we run about 20 court proceedings in the field of labour law, in which there is a conflict between the parties as to the correct implementation of rights and obligations under the Labour Code and related acts. Admittedly, as a lawyers we have no impact on the final decision of the courts, but



we take all actions that may bring our clients closer to defending their rights. Recently we won a case, in which the court ruled that 50% of the claims demanded by the employee were unfounded and the employer is not obliged to pay that amount for the employee.

As employers, the same number of women and men currently work with the AKLEGAL. These proportions may change same as the number of employees, because we are currently recruiting new employees for various positions. As described above, also in these recruitments we follow clearly defined criteria, the expectations of candidates are specifically described in the offer. What's more, the requirements for candidates are uniform, regardless of gender, race, age etc. Recruitment meetings are conducted in a professional atmosphere, interviews only concern issues relevant to the duties performed - no questions about private life or those that could violate personal interests or give the impression of discrimination.

### **3. Environment**

As described above, we have almost completely dispensed with purchasing water in plastic bottles. In 2019, the amount of used bottles was approx. 800, in 2020 the amount decreased by approx. 200 bottles per year (approx. 75%). In 2021, we additionally reduced the above-mentioned value and at the moment this result is about 50 bottles. Next year, we plan to completely abandon the purchase of bottled water, leaving only the order for water in glass bottles used during meetings with clients.

In the case of paper consumption, we recorded a decrease in the number of ordered reams of paper. In the previous reporting year, we ordered an average of 30 reams of paper per quarter. In the current year covered by the report, we reduced this amount by half, i.e. to 15 reams per quarter. In the case of toner for the printer, the issue is similar. In the previous reporting period, toner was replaced on average once a month, in the current reporting period it is replaced once every two months.

### **4. Anti-corruption**

As described above, we currently run two cases in which there are suspicions of committing corrupt acts. Due to the our opposition to acts of a corrupt nature, we are pleased with a small number of such cases, and it is positive that our clients neither become victims of illegal activities, nor do they themselves. Of course, we are aware that the number of cases we handle does not fully reflect the scale of the problem and we will

continue to be fully ready to provide legal support to entities who become victims of such activities or who observe corruption activities of other entities.





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