



**CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
AND GLOBAL COMPACT FORUM
6 December, 2005
Kyiv, Ukraine**

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Global Compact (GC) Forum was organized in Kyiv on 6 December by the United Nations Office in Ukraine. This high-level Forum was the first gathering of its kind representing several UN agencies, Government officials, Ukrainian business leaders, trade and labour unions, international development agencies, media, academia and non-governmental organizations. The main intent was for all to discuss corporate citizenship, share experiences and knowledge in the area of CSR, and generally to enhance the dialogue between business, government and NGOs. The event was attended by over 70 participants.

The purpose of this pre-launch event was to identify and mobilize a core group of Ukrainian companies to sign the GC and help them to set up the Ukrainian GC Network. This event presented CSR and GC in a business-case context, responding to pressing and ever present bottom-line concerns. This forum was attended by high and mid-level business managers, interested and committed towards improving business standards and pursuing CSR and business ethics. Examples of the Nordic and the Bulgarian GC networks' experience in partnering and applying the CSR and GC principles were also presented and discussed.

The Forum discussions also focused on the results of the national survey, conducted by the local United Nations Office, regarding the Ukrainian business attitudes towards CSR. Several examples of companies currently demonstrating socially responsible behaviour as were showcased. Moreover, the CSR constraints and incentives within the Ukrainian legislative environment were highlighted and debated among the participants. The panellists shared best practices on social reporting and CSR as an increasingly integral part of a holistic business and corporate strategy towards stakeholders.

During the Forum, a special focus was given on CSR and public policy. The participants discussed ways to enhance the public-private dialogue between business, government and civil society on national, regional and municipal level and formalize a collaborative process.

Key Outcomes:

1) Corporate Social Responsibility is here to stay

- There is a growing spotlight on the role of business in the Ukrainian society. More and more people are interested in the social and environmental impact of the companies, and the public pressure for CSR is likely to increase significantly in the next few years.
- There is a growing recognition among the Ukrainian businesses of the need to understand and respond to these expectations of the society in a manner that sustains their business and builds a competitive advantage.
- There is a growing recognition of the value of CSR and its contribution to the social challenges faced by the Government.
- The Government of Ukraine is keen to support the realization of Global Compact principles by the private sector and the creation of an enabling environment for its further promotion.

2) The Global Compact offers a unique framework for CSR in Ukraine

- To date there has been little to no systematic and strategic approach to promote responsible corporate citizenship in Ukraine so that business can be part of the solution to all challenges of development and MDGs.
- Some limited number of businesses in Ukraine, though, due to their own corporate obligations or self initiatives, have implemented some principles of GC and have undertaken activities to support sustainable development in Ukraine.
- The GC reinforces a culture of CSR because it asks the businesses to operate by a set of core values that are at the heart of good citizenship.
- The GC initiative is unique because it is based on truly universal values that are respected by all societies and cultures. It is a voluntary initiative and seen as a great tool to address CSR in Ukraine.
- The GC Network offers unique opportunity of belonging to a network of leading companies in the world, provides excellent grounds for the exchange socially and environmentally oriented business practices.

3) All participants have agreed to launch the Ukrainian Global Compact Network in 2006

- The UN Office in Ukraine will act as a GC Focal point, conducting outreach activities, raising awareness of GC among businesses, Government, NGOs, trade and labour organizations, academia and media, and providing support to the establishment of a local network.
- The UN Office will continue to facilitate the CSR dialogue between business-government- trade and labour organizations-civil society and the development of a CSR policy.
- Business leaders that share the vision and mission of the GC will be invited to engage as champions of the Compact in Ukraine. The GC will be launched during a high-level public meeting in the first quarter of 2006 and the network will be established in the second quarter of 2006.
- Special care should be taken that SMEs and their local umbrella organizations are involved in the preparations and in the event.
- Regional outreach activities and a national conference have been also planned for 2006.
- The strengthening the UN agencies and private sector partnership through implementation of joint development projects will also be in the agenda of 2006.