

# UN SUPPLIER CODE OF CONDUCT

**UN Charter:** The values enshrined in the United Nations (UN) Charter, *respect for fundamental human rights, social justice and human dignity, and respect for the equal rights of men and women*, serve as the overarching goals that suppliers to the UN are expected to achieve.

**Global Compact:** At the World Economic Forum, Davos, on 31 January 1999, the UN Secretary-General challenged world business leaders to "embrace and enact" the Global Compact, both in their individual corporate practices and by supporting appropriate public policies. The Global Compact's operational phase was launched at UN Headquarters in New York on 26 July 2000. During the first Global Compact Leaders Summit, held on 24 June 2004 at UN Headquarters in New York, the Secretary-General announced the addition of a tenth principle against corruption. The Global Compact is a voluntary international corporate citizenship network initiated to support the participation of both the private sector and other social actors to advance responsible corporate citizenship and universal social and environmental principles to meet the challenges of globalization. The United Nations strongly encourages all suppliers to actively participate in the Global Compact. And to that end, this Code has been developed with recognition of the importance of the ten principles of the UN Global Compact, and is viewed as an important means of integrating the Compact's principles into the operations of the UN. The Code addresses the issues included in the Compact in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and interpretation of the Code should be undertaken in a manner consistent with the Global Compact. Suppliers interested in supporting the Global Compact and for more information on the ten principles, can visit the Global Compact website at [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org).

**International Labor Organization (ILO) Core Labor Conventions:** The Labour Conventions as established by the tripartite UN affiliated agency, the ILO, have served as the foundation on which much of this Code of Conduct is based. It is the UN's expectation that any supplier providing products or services to the UN, will adhere to the spirit of its Charter, and the core principles of the ILO Conventions. The full text of the ILO Conventions can be accessed by accessing the ILO electronic database<sup>1</sup>.

**Continuous Improvement:** The provisions as set forth in this Code of Conduct provide the minimum standards expected of suppliers to the UN. It is the expectation of the UN that suppliers adhere to all laws, rules and regulations, and strive to exceed both international and industry best practices. The UN recognizes that reaching the standards established in this Code of Conduct is a dynamic rather than static process and encourages suppliers to continually improve their workplace conditions.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** The UN may conduct on-site evaluations and inspections of its supplier's facilities and those of their subcontractors to review their progress towards these principles. It is the expectation of the UN that suppliers, at a minimum, have established clear goals toward meeting the standards set forth in this Code of Conduct. The UN may monitor that milestones have been set and management systems have been put in place to ensure that the principles set out in this Code of Conduct have been met and failure to do so may impact the future ability of a supplier to do business with the UN. Notwithstanding the aspirational character of the principles contained in this Code of Conduct, UN Suppliers must understand that if they are awarded a contract with the United Nations, the United Nations General Conditions of Contract are an essential part of UN contracts and, therefore, legally enforceable against UN contractors.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp2.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp2.htm).

- 1. Supplier Relationships:** The provisions of this Code of Conduct set forth the expectations of all suppliers with whom the UN does business. The UN expects that these principles apply to suppliers, parent entities and subsidiary or affiliate entities, as well as all others with whom they do business including employees, subcontractors and other third-parties. The UN expects that suppliers ensure that this Code of Conduct is communicated to the employees and subcontractors of all suppliers, and that it is done in the local language and in a manner that is understood by all.
- 2. Promoting the Principles of this Code of Conduct:** The UN expects that its suppliers will establish and maintain appropriate management systems whose scope is related to the content of this Code of Conduct, and that they actively review, monitor and modify their management processes and business operations to ensure they align with the principles set forth in this Code of Conduct. All principles contained in this Code of Conduct are of equal importance independently of their order of appearance. Supplier participants in the Global Compact are strongly encouraged to operationalize its principles and to annually communicate their progress to stakeholders.
- 3. Subcontracting:** The UN expects that its suppliers encourage and work with their own suppliers and subcontractors to ensure that they also strive to meet the principles of this Code of Conduct or equivalent set of principles.

#### **Labour:**

- 4. Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining:** The UN expects its suppliers to recognize and respect the rights of employees to freely associate, organize and bargain collectively in accordance with the laws of the countries in which they are employed, as well as core ILO conventions *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, (C 87, 1948)* and *Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, (C.98-1949)*. The UN recognizes the importance of open communication and direct engagement between workers and management and suppliers are to respect the rights of workers to associate freely and communicate openly with management regarding working conditions without fear of harassment, intimidation, penalty, interference or reprisal.
- 5. Forced Labor:** The UN expects its suppliers to prohibit any use of forced, bonded or indentured labor or involuntary prison labor, and embrace employment practices consistent with ILO conventions pertaining to forced labor: *Forced Labour Convention, (c.29-1930)* and *Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, (C.105-1957)*. All work, including overtime work, will be voluntary and workers should be free to leave upon reasonable notice. Suppliers should also not mandate that workers hand over government-issued identification; passports or work permits as a condition of employment.
- 6. Child Labor:** The UN expects its suppliers, at a minimum, not to engage in any practice inconsistent with the rights set forth in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ILO Minimum Age Convention (C.138-1973)* or the *Prohibition and Immediate Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention (C. 182-1999)*. The minimum admission to employment or work shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling, normally not less than 15 years or 14 where the local law of the country permits, deferring to the greatest age. Additionally, all young workers must be protected from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education or that may be harmful to the child's health, physical, mental, social, spiritual or moral development. All suppliers should also adhere to legitimate workplace apprenticeship programs and comply with all laws and regulations governing child labor and apprenticeship programs.
- 7. Discrimination:** The UN does not tolerate any form of discrimination in hiring and employment practices on the ground or race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, health

condition, political opinion, nationality, social or ethnic origin, union membership or marital status. Consistent with the principles espoused in ILO Conventions on Discrimination (Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, C.111-1958) and Equal Remuneration (Equal Remuneration Convention, C. 100-1951), the UN also discourages discrimination regarding access to training, promotion, and rewards.

- 8. Working Hours:** The UN expects its suppliers to comply with all applicable working hour requirements as established by local law, and should never exceed 60 hours per week, including overtime, except in emergency or unusual situations. Suppliers must ensure that all overtime work is voluntary and compensated at the prevailing overtime rates. Suppliers are encouraged to ensure that workers are provided with one day off in every seven-day week.
- 9. Compensation:** The UN expects its suppliers to comply, at a minimum, with all wage and hour laws and regulations, including those pertaining to minimum wages, overtime wages, piece rates, other elements of compensation and to provide legally mandated benefits

#### **Human Rights:**

- 10. Human Rights:** The UN expects its suppliers to support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and to ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.
- 11. Harassment, Harsh or Inhumane Treatment:** The UN expects its suppliers to create and maintain an environment that treats all employees with dignity and respect and will not use any threats of violence, sexual exploitation or abuse, verbal or psychological harassment or abuse. No harsh or inhumane treatment coercion or corporal punishment of any kind is tolerated, nor is there to be the threat of any such treatment.
- 12. Health and Safety:** The UN expects its suppliers to follow all relevant legislation, regulations and directives in country in which they operate to ensure a safe and healthy workplace or any other location where production or work is undertaken. At a minimum, suppliers should strive to implement recognized management systems and guidelines such as the *ILO Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health (ILO-OSH-2001)* which can be found at ILO's website<sup>2</sup> and ensure at a minimum, reasonable access to potable water and sanitary facilities; fire safety; emergency preparedness and response; industrial hygiene; adequate lighting and ventilation; occupational injury and illness and machine safeguarding. Suppliers will also ensure these same standards apply to any dormitory or canteen facilities.
- 13. Mines:** We expect UN suppliers to strive not to engage in the sale or manufacture of anti-personnel mines or components utilized in the manufacture of anti-personnel mines.

#### **Environment:**

- 14. Environmental:** The UN expects its suppliers to have an effective environmental policy and to comply with existing legislation and regulations regarding the protection of the environment. Suppliers should wherever possible support a precautionary approach to environmental matters, undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility and encourage the diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies implementing sound life-cycle practices.

---

<sup>2</sup> [www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/management/guide.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/management/guide.htm)

- 15. Chemical and Hazardous Materials:** Chemical and other materials posing a hazard if released to the environment are to be identified and managed to ensure their safe handling, movement, storage, recycling or reuse and disposal.
- 16. Wastewater and Solid Waste:** Wastewater and solid waste generated from operations, industrial processes and sanitation facilities are to be monitored, controlled and treated as required prior to discharge or disposal.
- 17. Air Emissions:** Air emissions of volatile organic chemicals, aerosols, corrosives, particulates, ozone depleting chemicals and combustion by-products generated from operations are to be characterized, monitored, controlled and treated as required prior to discharge.
- 18. Minimize Waste, Maximize Recycling:** Waste of all types, including water and energy, are to be reduced or eliminated at the source or by practices such as modifying production, maintenance and facility processes, materials substitution, conservation, recycling and re-using materials.

**Bribery & Corruption:**

**19. Corruption:** The UN expects UN suppliers to adhere to the highest standard of moral and ethical conduct, to respect local laws and not engage in any form of corrupt practices, including extortion, fraud, or bribery, at a minimum.

**20. Conflict of Interest:** UN suppliers are expected to disclose to the UN any situation that may appear as a conflict of interest, and disclose to the UN if any UN official or professional under contract with the UN may have an interest of any kind in the supplier's business or any kind of economic ties with the supplier.

**21. Gifts and Hospitality:** The UN has a “zero tolerance” policy and does not accept any type of gift or any offer of hospitality beyond that of a representational nature. The UN will not accept any recreational trips to sporting or cultural events, theme parks or offers of holidays, transportation, or invitations to extravagant lunches or dinners. The UN expects UN suppliers not to offer any benefit such as free goods or services or a work position or sales opportunity to a UN staff member or a former UN staff member in order to facilitate the suppliers business with the UN.

**We encourage UN suppliers to communicate to us any actions taken to improve its business practices and to send us suggestions about how can the UN best contribute to the implementation of the principles set out in this Code of Conduct.**

**Contacts:**

**Any questions related to this Code of Conduct can be addressed to the Chief, Procurement Service**