

COMUNICADO/

Maia, 25th June 2019

35 company leaders sign WBCSD manifest

SONAE SUBSCRIBES WORLDWIDE INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE THE DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Sonae Group is one of the pioneer signatories of the CEO Guide to Human Rights of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), which motivates company leaders to promote the defence of human rights and the improvement of people's lives.

Sonae, due to its corporate responsibility policy, has decided to support the new initiative developed by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), which aims to promote the defence of human rights and the improvement of people's lives.

A member of WBCSD since its foundation, in 1995, Sonae was one of the companies that boosted the creation of BCSD Portugal, and Belmiro de Azevedo was its first President. The promotion of human rights is a central element in the management of Sonae companies, which stands as a long living company and has always assumed its responsibility in the field of sustainability. This commitment has materialised, throughout the years, into a lasting legacy of social and environmental actions, with real results way beyond words and intentions.

The *CEO Guide to Human Rights* was released in London, at the Bloomberg Sustainable Business Summit 2019, and systematises a set of principles and actions that CEOs promote to ensure that their companies go beyond the legal conformity in these matters and boost positive changes in the lives of the people and communities around which they operate.

The WBCSD guide was subscribed by 35 leaders of organisations such as ENI, Michelin, Nestlé, Total and Unilever, among them Cláudia Azevedo, Soane CEO, and other Portuguese companies such as Brisa, EDP and The Navigator Company. In total, these companies have 2.8 million employees and their activity is supported by global chains of supply, which cross 17 industry sectors.



IMPROVING LIFE

A Sonae é uma multinacional que gere um portefólio diversificado de negócios nas áreas de retalho, serviços financeiros, tecnologia, centros comerciais e telecomunicações. Está presente em cerca de 70 países, tendo atingido, no final de 2018, um volume de negócios de 5,9 mil milhões de euros.

Saiba mais em www.sonae.pt

Para mais informações, contacte:
MARIA JOÃO OLIVEIRA
Comunicação Externa / Sonae
T. +351 22 010 4745 // E. mjoliveira@sonae.pt
DIOGO SIMÃO
Diretor / BAN Corporate & Media Relations
M. +351 93 652 86 39 // E. ds@ban.pt

With the promotion of the *CEO Guide to Human Rights*, the signing leaders send a clear message on the need to elevate the ambition concerning human rights, the relevance of adopting standards which foster the respect for those rights and the importance to establish clear expectations for suppliers and partners, boosting the relationship and the collaboration between peers, governments and the society.

Cláudia Azevedo, Sonae CEO, states: “Company leaders, due to the parts they play and their economic and social impact, must take the necessary measures for their organisations to be an example of good sustainability practice, namely in matters such as human rights and the environment, contributing to a better and fairer society, with equal opportunities and better life conditions”.

Peter Bakker, President and CEO of WBCSD stresses that “companies have the vital responsibility of respecting human rights, but they also have a great opportunity to transform the lives of people for the better. To promote universal human rights for everyone is one of the most powerful opportunities we have to contribute to the Sustainable Development Objectives”. He adds: “The Guide presents a bold unprecedented declaration by company leaders, whose companies’ actions and policies influence vast global supply chains. We hope that their leadership inspires other CEOs to support this relevant cause”.

Kitrhona Cerri, WBCSD’s Social Impact Director, stresses: “While the debate on corporate respect for human rights has gained huge relevance since the launch of UN’s Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), in 2011, we have observed that the CEOs’ leadership on this topic has been limited, and we believe the time has come to elevate the debate to C-suite and promote the CEOs’ action beyond some leading companies”.

The CEOs’ plays a crucial part in ensuring that human rights are properly preserved as far as their own operations and commercial relations are concerned.

The *CEO Guide to Human Rights* is available [here](#).