

UN Global Compact +15 General Assembly Session

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Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen,

- 15 year ago at Davos the Secretary General Kofi Annan made a call to business, NGO and academia leaders to assume responsibility alongside governments for a better world.
- I was one of those with whom this call resonated deeply. I became the 1st Turkish signatory of the Global Compact, and later assumed the responsibility to establish and lead the Turkish Network.
- Now the Turkish Network has more than 300 members including 15 of the largest 20 companies.
- Today I am honored to address the General Assembly on behalf of 90 Local Networks as the Chair of the Local Networks Advisory Group.
- Yes. UN Global Compact is has laid out a global infrastructure in 90 countries undertaking activities and partnerships to advance UN goals such as Women Empowerment, Caring for Climate, Business for Peace...
- Over 50 have conducted national consultations for the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Over 20 working with governments to improve the enabling environment so that corporate sustainability can go to scale.
 - Under Turkish presidency of G20, my firm ARGE Consulting as the B20 Governance & Sustainability Knowledge Partner is working towards making encouragement of principled business practices a G20 priority
- Implementation and going to scale are inevitably local. Local Networks are appropriately positioned and fit for purpose. We need to strengthen them. Local Networks are also a source of innovation.
- In order to make a difference on a global scale we need to leverage Natural Incentives and Allies:

- Turkish Network is working with banks to help them incorporate Global Compact principles into their credit evaluation systems, thereby reducing their risks and improving responsible businesses access to finance
- Similarly we are working with brand owners to incorporate sustainability criteria into their purchasing contracts, improving responsible businesses access to markets
- These practices are win-win-win approaches for all involved
- Similarly the governments should start thinking about aligning incentives with Sustainable Development Goals
 - For example, unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, are key concerns. Yet most governments impose taxes on employment and subsidize unemployment!
 - We are all concerned about economic growth, but we tax economic activity!
 - We want more innovation, but tax value added!
 - On the other hand we want to reduce carbon emissions, but do not tax it!
 - Therefore, we need to consider how we can tax less what we want more of and instead tax what we need less of in a revenue neutral manner. If we put our minds together, especially with the help of the intellectual power of schools who are the signatories for Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), I am confident that we can find ways to accomplish achieving such alignment.
- For a better world businesses, NGOs, academic world, and governments need to collaborate more. Collaboration requires trust. Trust is the essence of good governance and sustainable development. No wonder then, Local Networks' consultations for SDGs identified good governance as a key priority.
- Good governance is a culture that needs to be embraced by the governments, corporations, NGOs, labor organizations, and academic institutions. I would like to share a quote from Yunus Emre, the great sufi poet and thinker of the 13th century from Anatolia, "Regard the other as you regard yourself, this is the meaning of the four Holy Books, if there is any."

This understanding is the basis of sustainable and inclusive development we all need for a better world.

- Before closing, I would like to thank all those who have played a crucial role locally and globally in making the UN Global Compact the most inclusive sustainability platform in the world by understanding and internalizing that “Doing good, is good business.”
- I would also like to express a special gratitude to my friend Georg Kell who is leaving an enduring legacy as the first and founding Executive Director. (I would also like to welcome the new Executive Director Lise Kingo who was elected through a thorough process. She now has the best job to mobilize businesses to a force for good on a broader scale and the Local Networks will be there to deliver this mission.)
- In summary,
 - Strengthening Local Networks for better implementation on the ground,
 - Aligning incentives with the SDGs to be able to go to scale faster, and
 - Embracing good governance at all our institutions to improve trust among all stakeholders are the keys for a more sustainable and inclusive future.