

“Net-Zero Goal Is Needed for the World, and Is Good for Business”

New York City, Tuesday September 22nd, 2015 - Today, Leaders of The B Team, running some of the world’s largest companies, called on governments and businesses alike to aim for net-zero greenhouse-gas emissions by 2050 or before, building upon their February 2015 call to world leaders.

A ‘Net-Zero by 2050’ aspiration being adopted by leading companies demonstrates the importance of bold long-term targets, and reinforces what the Leaders of The B Team are [asking for](#) from world leaders in the political process at COP21 in Paris.

The ‘Net-Zero by 2050’ global goal is grounded on an assessment of the latest scientific research, business risks and the economic costs of failing to keep within the 2°C threshold.

Several global companies associated with The B Team are leading the way by announcing their aspiration to achieve ‘Net-Zero by 2050’ including, Chinese construction company Broad Group, African telecommunications group Econet, Brazil cosmetics manufacturer Natura, the consumer goods company, Unilever and international investment group Virgin.

The B Team companies Econet, Kering, Natura and Unilever, have also shown their support for net-zero through specific climate commitments as part of the [We Mean Business campaign](#) for climate action. These specific commitments represent some of the most important practical steps to get to ‘Net-Zero by 2050’ and over 179 companies have already made over 333 commitments as part of the campaign.

“Decisive action on climate change is a moral and business imperative. Momentum is now building for a new direction; a new model of development that delivers a sharp reduction in emissions and a concerted effort to eliminate poverty in all its forms. The climate summit in Paris will be the first test of our ability to implement the ambitious Sustainable Development Goal framework that will be adopted in New York this week. An ambitious long term goal – Net-Zero emissions by 2050 – would send a signal that the world is serious about delivering climate security and global development for all.” said Paul Polman (CEO of Unilever, Chair of WBCSD and B Team Leader).

Richard Branson, Virgin Group Founder added: “We now have the opportunity to make a positive difference for business, people and the planet. Taking bold climate action now has the potential to unleash the full power of business and lift millions of people out of poverty. We’re the first generation to recognize this and the last generation that will have this opportunity. It’s time for all of us to join forces and drive the transition to a thriving net-zero GHG emissions economy by 2050.”

The adoption of the Global Goals later this week in addition to the agreement targeted to be signed at COP21 later this year, highlight that 2015 is a critical year of opportunity for

government and business to develop frameworks and specific long-term targets to address a number of the world's most pressing challenges, and ensure we transition to a thriving and just net-zero world.

A global commitment to net-zero greenhouse-gas emissions by 2050 from governments would provide a strong signal to businesses and investors to help them plan for and deliver a low carbon future. The B Team Leaders are now urging other business leaders to join the growing movement to create a low carbon economy through actively adapting their business strategies in-line with this objective and setting clear targets and commitments.

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Further Background and Information

Why 'Net-Zero by 2050'

The B Team Leaders have joined many others in realizing that 'Net-Zero by 2050' is an ambitious but both realistic and necessary goal. 196 countries have agreed with scientists that we must contain global warming under 2 degrees Celsius. If we reach the point of balance (where our CO₂ emissions have fallen to where they balance the world's ability to absorb that CO₂ – hence "net-zero") much later than 2050 then the chances of failure soon rise to over 1 in 3¹. "That's not a gamble we would take in our businesses or our personal lives – why are we risking the planet?" said Richard Branson (co-founder of The B Team and Founder of Virgin Group).

About The B Team

The B Team is a not-for-profit initiative formed by a global group of business leaders to catalyze a better way of doing business for the wellbeing of people and the planet.

The team includes Sir Richard Branson, Kathy Calvin, Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Arianna Huffington, Dr. Mo Ibrahim, Guilherme Leal, Strive Masiyiwa, Blake Mycoskie, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, François-Henri Pinault, Paul Polman, Mary Robinson, Ratan Tata, Zhang Yue, Professor Muhammad Yunus, Jochen Zeitz.

¹ *IPCC figures show a 66% chance of staying within 2 degrees if net-zero emissions is achieved by 2070 for CO₂ and all greenhouse-gases by 2100.*

About We Mean Business

We Mean Business is a coalition of organisations working with thousands of the world's most influential businesses and investors. These businesses recognize that the transition to a low carbon economy is the only way to secure sustainable economic growth and prosperity for all. To accelerate this transition, we have formed a common platform to amplify the business voice, catalyze bold climate action by all, and promote smart policy frameworks. Details about how other companies can join The B Team and make commitments into the We Mean Business campaign can be found at www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/take-action

About BROAD Group

BROAD Group is a private manufacturer of central air conditioning non-electric absorption chillers that are powered by natural gas and waste heat based in Changsha, China. BROAD Group is based on the vision of unique technologies and the tenet of preserving life. All BROAD products and services are subversions of traditional industries, and are essentially optimizing human life and earth's environment. BROAD Group was established in 1988, headquartered in Changsha, China and has products in more than 80 countries.

Quote for use:

The Broad Group founder and CEO, Mr. Zhang Yue leads a company seeking new ways to develop more energy efficient and climate resilient buildings. "Sustainable development is critical in an era where social transformation and accelerating urbanization is occurring in many countries. Aspiring to be a 'Net-Zero by 2050' company is consistent with Broad Group's commitment to minimizing its environmental impact and developing technologies that are beneficial to mankind."

About Econet

Econet is a diversified global telecommunications company with operations and investments in Africa, Latin America, Asia Pacific, Europe and the US. The company operates mobile wireless networks, satellite communications, fibre broadband services and data centres. Econet is also involved in mobile financial services, hospitality and renewable energy.

Quote for use:

Econet Founder Strive Masiyiwa spoke about the truly global nature of this call-to-action: "The world needs to work together to disrupt the current trend towards man-made climate change or it will be the poorest that will be hardest hit. The solutions exist and are cost-effective, today. Econet and many other companies on the African continent have been developing such solutions in the energy, communications and water sectors. We therefore see the transition to a low-carbon global economy as an historic opportunity for entrepreneurship and lifting millions out of poverty in a sustainable way."

About Kering Group

A world leader in apparel and accessories, Kering develops an ensemble of powerful Luxury and Sport & Lifestyle brands: Gucci, Bottega Veneta, Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Brioni, Christopher Kane, McQ, Stella McCartney, Tomas Maier, Sergio Rossi,

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Boucheron, Dodo, Girard-Perregaux, JeanRichard, Pomellato, Qeelin, Ulysse Nardin, PUMA, Volcom, Cobra and Electric. By 'empowering imagination' in the fullest sense, Kering encourages its brands to reach their potential, in the most sustainable manner. Present in more than 120 countries, the Group generated revenues of €10 billion in 2014 and had more than 37,000 employees at year end. The Kering (previously PPR) share is listed on Euronext Paris (FR 0000121485, KER.PA, KER.FP).

Quote for use:

Kering Group CEO, François-Henri Pinault emphasized the business benefit of these commitments: "Kering has committed to science-based targets, zero deforestation, consistent climate reporting and mainstreaming climate information in our reporting. Our Environmental Profit & Loss account (EP&L) in particular has not only highlighted climate related risks we can now address but has also identified the next wave of business opportunities which will allow our business to thrive while mitigating our impact on people and planet".

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About Natura

Founded in 1969, Natura is the biggest Brazilian manufacturer of cosmetics and health and beauty products. Leader in the direct selling industry in Brazil, it recorded BRL 7.4 billion in net revenue in 2014. It employs seven thousand people and cooperates with a network of 1.8 million consultants. Its operations span 14 countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Colombia and France. In December 2014, Natura became the largest and the first publicly-traded company to obtain the B Corps certification for its high standards of environmental and social stewardship.

Quote for use:

Natura's cofounder Guilherme Leal added an important and pioneering perspective from Brazil. "We are proud to have been carbon neutral since 2007, but this clearly doesn't go far enough. At Natura we have committed to generate positive impact socially and environmentally by 2050." He added: "The effects of climate change hit the poorest hardest. Businesses from the developing world also have the responsibility to join this effort and the opportunity to innovate and generate prosperity in the pursuit of 'Net-Zero'".

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About Unilever

Unilever is one of the world's leading suppliers of Food, Home and Personal Care products with sales in over 190 countries and reaching 2 billion consumers a day. It has 172,000 employees and

generated sales of €48.4 billion in 2014. Over half (57%) of the company's footprint is in developing and emerging markets. Unilever has more than 400 brands found in homes around the world, including Persil, Dove, Knorr, Domestos, Hellmann's, Lipton, Wall's, PG Tips, Ben & Jerry's, Marmite, Magnum and Lynx.

Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan (USLP) commits to:

- Decoupling growth from environmental impact.
- Helping more than a billion people take action to improve their health and well-being.
- Enhancing the livelihoods of millions of people by 2020.

Unilever was ranked number one in its sector in the 2015 Dow Jones Sustainability Index. In the FTSE4Good Index, it achieved the highest environmental score of 5. It led the list of Global Corporate Sustainability Leaders in the 2015 GlobeScan/SustainAbility annual survey for the fifth year running, and in 2015 was ranked the most sustainable food and beverage company in Oxfam's Behind the Brands Scorecard.

Unilever has been named in LinkedIn's Top 3 most sought-after employers across all sectors.

For more information about Unilever and its brands, please visit www.unilever.com. For more information on the USLP: www.unilever.com/sustainable-living/

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About Virgin Group

Virgin is a leading international investment group and one of the world's most recognised and respected brands. Conceived in 1970 by Sir Richard Branson, the Virgin Group has gone on to grow successful businesses in sectors including mobile telephony, travel and transportation, financial services, leisure and entertainment and health and wellness.

In 2004 Richard established Virgin Unite, the non-profit foundation of the Virgin Group, which unites people and entrepreneurial ideas to create opportunities for a better world. Most of his time is now spent building businesses that will make a positive difference in the world and working with Virgin Unite and organisations it has incubated, such as The Elders, The Carbon War Room, The B Team, Ocean Unite and Branson Centre of Entrepreneurship. He also serves on the Global Commission on Drug Policy and supports ocean conservation with the Ocean Elders.