



## NEWS RELEASE

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### RJC Signs UN Gender Responsive Standards Declaration

Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) – the global standard setting organisation for the jewellery supply chain - has strengthened its ongoing commitment to gender equality by signing the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) 'Declaration on Gender Responsive Standards and Standard Development'. The UNECE's Declaration is intended to help achieve gender equality, empower women and girls throughout jewellery supply chains.

UNECE Executive Secretary, Olga Algayerova said: "Multi-stakeholder dialogues and concerted efforts across all sectors are needed to advance gender equality as a key driver for the 2030 Agenda. Standards offer powerful tools to harness this potential. I welcome the Responsible Jewellery Council among the 65 organizations worldwide to date who, by signing the UNECE Declaration, have committed to take concrete action for gender inclusive standards development, gender responsive standards and gender balance, at all levels."

Responsible Jewellery Council's Executive Director, Iris Van der Veken said: "We are proud to be part of the United Nation's gender equality movement, the signing of this declaration marks a great milestone in RJC history. While the issues on gender equality are complex and deeply-rooted, businesses can play a critical role in changing attitudes, building responsible practices throughout the value chain, and creating inclusive and safe work environments. The RJC focuses on increasing awareness of the gender gap within the jewellery and watch industry - and supporting members on their journey of continuous improvement."

Chair of the Responsible Jewellery Council, David Bouffard said: "It is our shared responsibility as an industry to drive gender equality forward. In order to make an impact and help reduce the gender gap, businesses need to embed gender equality practices into their corporate strategies. Through our partnership with the UNECE we will be focusing on further developing materials to support RJC members, to help them take practical steps towards improving the gender balance in their companies, and throughout the jewellery supply chain."

The UNECE Declaration recognises and supports organisations like the RJC to implement action plans to improve gender balance, empower women, share practices and inspirational stories across the world. Since its launch in 2019, the declaration has so far been signed by 65 standards organisations around the world.

Gender quality is Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the United Nations 2030 Agenda and has been embedded as an integral part of the RJC's Code of Practices standard.

The World Economic Forum's 'Global Gender Gap Report 2020' found that it will take more than 100 years to close the gender gap at the current rate of progress. By focusing on empowerment and promoting inclusion through standards will help towards economic growth, ensuring safe and secure working environments for all workers.

**ENDS**

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The Responsible Jewellery Council is the trading name of the Council for Responsible Jewellery Practices Ltd.  
The Council for Responsible Jewellery Practices Ltd, 9 Whitehall, First Floor Front, London, SW1A 2DD, United Kingdom.  
The Council for Responsible Jewellery Practices Ltd is registered in England and Wales with company number 05449042.

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**Image one** (Left – Right) Executive Director, Responsible Jewellery Council, Iris Van der Veken, and UNECE Executive Secretary, Olga Algayerova.



**Image two** (Left – Right) UNECE Executive Secretary, Olga Algayerova and Executive Director, Responsible Jewellery Council, Iris Van der Veken – signing the declaration.



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**About RJC**

The Responsible Jewellery Council is an international not-for-profit standards and certification organisation. It has more than 1,200 member companies that span the jewellery supply chain from mine to retail. RJC Members commit to and are independently audited against the RJC Code of Practices – an international standard on responsible business practices for diamonds, gold and platinum group metals. The Code of Practices (COP) addresses human rights, labour rights, environmental impact, mining practices, product disclosure and many more important topics in the jewellery supply chain. RJC also works with multi-stakeholder initiatives on responsible sourcing and supply chain due diligence. The RJC's Chain-of-Custody Certification (CoC) for precious metals supports these initiatives and can

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be used as a tool to deliver broader Member and stakeholder benefit. Through the implementation of the COP and CoC members contribute towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 agenda.

The RJC is a [Full Member of the ISEAL Alliance](#) – the global association for sustainability standards. For more information on RJC Members, Certification, and Standards please visit [www.responsiblejewellery.com](http://www.responsiblejewellery.com). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

#### **About UNECE's Gender Responsive Standards initiative**

The Declaration has been developed at the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as part of the [Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative](#), a diverse working group composed of representatives from standardization bodies, gender specialists, representatives of regulatory bodies, policymakers, NGOs, UN organizations and members of the academic community.

The Initiative aims to strengthen the use of standards and technical regulations as powerful tools to attain Sustainable Development Goal 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), integrate a gender lens in the development of both standards and technical regulations, as well as elaborate gender indicators and criteria that could be used in standards development. The Initiative has been developed under UNECE's Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6)

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