

26 October 2020

WIL  
EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR  
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

## Event Report WIL Online Debate

### The EU Green Deal in the face of COVID-19



On the 26<sup>th</sup> of October, WIL Europe organised an **Online Debate on the EU Green Deal in the face of COVID-19, sponsored by Kering**. The event, which was moderated by **Thaima**, WIL's President, featured a high-level panel of speakers, including **Didier Reynders, European Commissioner for Justice; Heidi Hautala MEP; Antoine Colombani**, Member of Cabinet of Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal; and WIL member **Marie-Claire Daveu**, Chief Sustainability Officer and Head of International Institutional Affairs at Kering.

This conference provided an opportunity for **sustainability experts from different sectors to come together to share their perspective on the future prospects for a Deal** which has been at the heart of the EU Commission's agenda since 2019, **given the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic**. During the debate, the high-level speakers debated both opportunities and challenges in generating engagement for the EU Green Deal during COVID-19. Among the issues debated were the critical role of consumers and producers for achieving the SDGs, and the importance of collective buy-in and action to make the Deal a reality.

*Premium*



*Silver*



*WTP*



*Associate*



*In-Kind*



**OUR ONLINE DEBATE AT A GLANCE**



**WIL ONLINE CONFERENCE**

**EU GREEN DEAL & COVID-19**  
How to keep the environmental momentum going

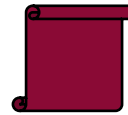
26 October 2020  
2:30 - 4:00 p.m. CEST



 <b>Didier Reynders</b> EU Commissioner for Justice	 <b>Heidi Hautala</b> Member of European Parliament	 <b>Antoine Colombani</b> Member of cabinet, EU Commissioner Frans Timmermans
 <b>Marie-Claire Daveu</b> Chief Sustainability Officer, Kering WIL Member	 Moderated by <b>Thaima Samman</b> Partner of SAMMAN Law & Corporate Affairs and WIL President	



**ONLINE DEBATE**



**2 PANEL DEBATES**



**4 HIGH LEVEL SPEAKERS**



**65+ PARTICIPANTS**

*Premium*



*Silver*



*WTP*



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*In-Kind*



## FIRST SESSION

### *How to engage all stakeholders to make the Green New Deal a reality post-pandemic*

**Antoine Colombani, Member of Cabinet of Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal**



*“We need action from everybody in society, including businesses and governments”.*

*“We need to raise the motivation and enthusiasm for sustainability”.*

During this first panel debate, Antoine Colombani – Member of Cabinet of Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President for the European Green Deal – recalled the **important role of the Green Deal in the context of the crisis and economic recovery**. He underlined **what businesses can expect from the EU Green Deal**, and **what the EU Commission is, in return, expecting from businesses and civil society**. Mr Colombani highlighted the importance of making the right investments, especially in the areas where there is a synergy between environmental protection and economic growth. Furthermore, he stressed that both **Member States and enterprises have an integral role to play in guaranteeing the success of the EU Green Deal and** must step up efforts to ensure that it becomes a reality.

**Marie-Claire Daveu, Chief Sustainability Officer and Head of International Institutional Affairs at Kering – WIL Member**

*“We are in a framework which is changing very quickly, thus we need to move faster”.*

*“At Kering we believe that if we want to change the paradigm we have to count on collective action”.*



Marie-Claire Daveu **provided the industry perspective** during this first discussion, explaining **how the fashion industry can contribute to achieving Europe’s sustainability goals** following COVID-19. Ms Daveu shared the work of [The Fashion Pact](#) as a **recent example of a collaborative approach to promoting sustainability in the fashion sector**. Furthermore, she provided details **on Kering’s efforts to reduce their environmental impact**, thus highlighting their role as a leading example in the industry.

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**Thaima Samman, a Partner of SAMMAN Law & Corporate Affairs and WIL President**



*“It is very important that, during COVID-19, we can still come together to discuss core issues like sustainability as a network”.*



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## SECOND SESSION

### *Sustainable Development Goals, and Corporate Social Responsibility*

Didier Reynders, European Commissioner for Justice

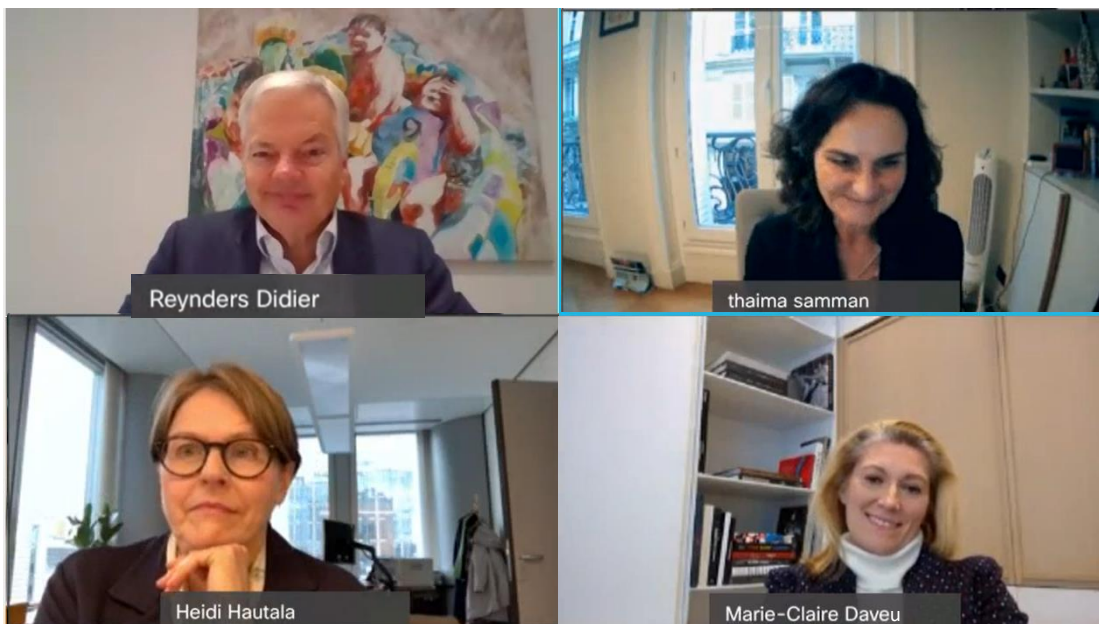


*“We urgently need to change the way we produce and consume”.*

*“We need to ensure the importance of social fairness when transitioning to sustainability”.*

In this second panel discussion, Didier Reynders – European Commissioner for Justice – shared the Commission’s views on Sustainable Corporate Governance (SCG). Commissioner Reynders discussed the **new two-pillar initiative on SCG**, which is due to be launched in 2021, and which will follow **publication of the Commission’s study on due diligence requirements throughout the supply chain** and directors’ duties.

Commissioner Reynders underscored the important role of directors in achieving sustainability, calling on them **to embed sustainability goals within their strategies**. He highlighted that one of the key issues for the Commission is **ensuring that the new Directive is proportionate**.



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## Heidi Hautala, Member of European Parliament



*'We have entered a new paradigm, where sustainability and responsible business conduct are integral to the Green Deal'.*

*'A lot of consumers are not confident that they are getting full transparency'.*

Member of European Parliament, Heidi Hautala, focused her intervention on **the role of civil society and the future of EU democratic support in the context of the Covid-19 crisis**. Ms Hautala stressed the importance of deploying a **multi-faceted approach** to fair and sustainable supply chains in the production of substances such as cocoa and coffee. This approach would **unite an ambitious and integrated EU Sustainability strategy with the need for Mandatory Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence legislation**. Heidi Hautala also highlighted the importance of different actors in society in working towards EU Sustainability Goals, noting that the **unity of individuals is integral to pushing for greater respect of human rights and protection of the environment in supply chains**.

## Marie-Claire Daveu, Chief Sustainability Officer and Head of International Institutional Affairs at Kering – WIL Member

*"If you look at and monitor what is happening inside your own "frontiers" only, as a company you are not doing your job for the planet and for the people".*

*"The new generation of clients and employees are paying close attention to the origins and supply chains of their clothes".*



Marie-Claire Daveu drew upon Kering's historic and long-term commitment to sustainability when discussing SGDs and CSR. She shared examples of **Kering's best practices to reduce their environmental impact, including their [2025 Roadmap](#)** which operates around three pillars: **care for the environment, social collaboration, and creating sustainable innovation**. Kering's tangible environmental targets as part of this roadmap will be a 40% reduction in their environmental profit and a 50% reduction of their carbon emissions. However, the CSO and Head of International Institutional Affairs for Kering also highlighted that these changes required a shift in mentality. **For retailers to reduce their environmental impact, they must adopt a mindset of open sourcing, transparency, and humility**. Finally, Ms Daveu focused **on the importance of innovation and education** in reaching targets and creating long-term awareness and partnerships.

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## CLOSING REMARKS

### *Wrap up: Women's Talent Pool Programme 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Participant*

**Natalia Melniciuc – WTP 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Participant and IT Mediation Manager in International Operations, Orange Moldova**



*“Sustainable development is one of the fundamental objectives of the European Union”.*

*“Now, more than ever, we really need to enlarge the vision of stakeholders”.*

Participant in the Women's Talent Pool Programme 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Natalia Melniciuc, eloquently summarised both discussions and brought our attention back to the role of the European Union (EU) as an institution founded on collaboration. She highlighted that, **whilst sustainability is becoming a priority for enterprises** in order to engage future generations of consumers and employees, it is also **a priority for the EU**, since it is based upon **the core value of collaborative action**. She ended by reminding the audience that sustainability is a pressing reality that we all need to try and address.

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