



PRESS RELEASE

- **Open For Business announces that Burberry and Inditex join the global coalition**
- **Open For Business is a coalition of global companies advocating for global LGB&T inclusion. It is supported by Accenture, American Express, AT&T, Barclays, Brunswick, EY, Google, IBM, LinkedIn, Linklaters, MasterCard, McKinsey & Company, Microsoft, Royal Bank of Scotland, Standard Chartered, Tesco, Thomson Reuters and Virgin Group.**

Washington D.C., Thursday 25th February, 2016 – Burberry and Inditex today joined Open For Business, a coalition of leading global companies supporting LGB&T inclusion around the world.

The announcement will be officially made at a reception in Burberry's Washington DC store Thursday evening.

The purpose of Open For Business is to make and promote a positive business and economic case for global LGB&T rights. As businesses with customers, employees, suppliers and operations around the world, the coalition believes successful, enterprising businesses thrive in diverse, inclusive societies and the spread of anti-LGB&T policies runs counter to the interests of business and economic development.

Burberry is the preeminent luxury British clothing house, with over 500 stores in 50 countries. Inditex is the world's biggest fashion retail group, with brands including Zara, Massimo Dutti, and Bershka. It has over 6,700 stores in 88 countries.

Christopher Bailey, CEO of London-based Burberry Group, said:

“At Burberry we look for talent, passion and unique perspectives when we are building our teams around the world. The inclusion of the LGBT communities within our organization is absolutely fundamental to all of our accomplishments, our culture and our creativity.”

Pablo Isla, the Chairman and CEO of Inditex, said:

“As a company that employs people from over 150 nationalities, and with stores all over the world, Inditex celebrates the diversity of our customers and employees. We always encourage everyone to live their passion for fashion with freedom and respect.”

“Open For Business shows a clear path to understanding the value of diversity, and working together for a really inclusive world.”

Randy Berry, U.S. State Department's Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons, said:

“The spread of anti-LGB&T laws should be a concern for any business with a global consumer base.

“It is important for companies to take a clear stand on LGB&T inclusion – not just in the workplace, but in the communities they serve. Building an inclusive corporate culture will help to create a more inclusive society.”

Frank Mugisha, a leading LGB&T activist from Uganda, and winner of the 2011 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award and 2014 nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize, also attended the reception. He said:

“Open For Business is an important initiative, because the governments do listen to the global business community, and this coalition is presenting a compelling economic argument.”

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Open For Business: the Report

The Open For Business coalition published a comprehensive report, written by authors Jon Miller and Lucy Parker, which shows that successful businesses thrive in open, diverse and inclusive societies. The report, ‘Open For Business: the Economic and Business Case for LGB&T Inclusion,’ presents the most substantial evidence base to date on this subject, on three levels:

- Economic performance:
 - LGB&T inclusion signals a diverse and creative environment, and is associated with higher levels of innovation and entrepreneurship.
 - LGB&T discrimination often goes hand-in-hand with a culture of corrupt practices, a lack of openness and a weak civil society with poorly developed institutions.
- Business performance:
 - Companies that support inclusion and diversity are better able to compete for talented employees, and show higher rates of retention.
 - LGB&T inclusion is associated with higher levels of innovation and more effective collaboration and teamwork.
- Individual performance:
 - Individuals working in open, diverse, inclusive environments have higher levels of engagement and satisfaction, leading to greater productivity.
 - They are more likely to speak up with suggestions to improve performance, and to “go the extra mile” and contribute to the culture of the company.

The full report and details of the coalition can be found at: <http://www.open-for-business.org/>

Open For Business: Background

Open For Business was launched by Bill Clinton at the Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative in New York, September 2015.

Despite progress in some countries, the global situation for LGB&T persons is urgent: In at least 77 countries around the world today, same sex relationships are illegal, at times involving lifetime imprisonment. In seven countries, same sex acts are even punishable by death. Even in more progressive countries, violence and discrimination against LGB&T people still exists in the form of discriminatory laws, unfair treatment by employers and negative social attitudes.

A broad base of civil society organizations support Open For Business: Open For Business is a coalition of global businesses. It has been developed in dialogue with a number of civil society organizations, which will continue to provide advice and guidance. These organizations include: the UK Department of International Development, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Global HIV/AIDs Alliance, the Kaleidoscope Trust, the Human Rights Campaign, Stonewall, Out Leadership and OUTstanding.

By joining Open For Business, members commit to: respecting the diversity of their customers, employees, suppliers and partners wherever they are in the world; showing progress in implementing strong and robust policies to provide a working environment that respects and protects *all* individuals and tackling all forms of discrimination against LGB&T employees.

About Open For Business: This is an informal coalition of businesses working together on this issue; it has no legal incorporation of any kind. At this stage it is a small coalition and decision-making is by discussion and consensus. Open For Business has been developed collaboratively by the member companies, and the coalition has an 'administrative home' at Brunswick Group.

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