

Dear Friends of KAGIDER,

KAGIDER, which has Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, has been attending the meetings of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York since 2011 and presenting a best practice project that KAGIDER implemented from Turkey.

The 67th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women was held this year with the theme "Empowering Women in the Digital Age Through Entrepreneurship and Partnerships". Important issues that serve as guidance for countries and companies were discussed at the meetings held after International Women's Day on March 8.

As part of the UN Commission on the Status of Women sessions, we organized the "Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship in the Digital Age" panel in cooperation with KAGIDER and Garanti BBVA. The panel received great interest from participants consisting of representatives from the business world, civil society organizations, and leading opinion leaders from around the world.

This year, we were in New York with a strong delegation from KAGIDER. The 27-person delegation, including myself, was composed of KAGIDER Vice President Berrin Kuleli, Board Members Esra Bezircioğlu, Fisun Usta, Gülsün Zeytinoğlu, Güzin İlker, Extended Board Members Alev Akın, Beylem Leblebici Birsen, İstem Özden Alpar, Kıvılcım Pınar Kocabıyık, Sezen Saral, and KAGIDER Members Bahar Şen, Ferda Boyar Saçlı, Müge Çetin, Nesrin Karaoğlu Otuzoğlu, Neval Karagöz, Remziye Büyükkayman, Seda Yekeler, Sedef Çınar, Serpil Şahinoğlu, Sibel Aysu, Tülin Yazıcı, Vennas Akyol, Yeliz Şahinoğlu, General Secretary Yeşim Seviğ, and Corporate Relations Manager Aylin Dinler. Our project presentation was joined by our dream partners from the Garanti team, Garanti BBVA SME Venture Banking Manager Selin Öz, and the Union of Municipalities of Turkey Consultant Filiz Evran. We sincerely thank each and every KAGIDER member for their valuable presence and contributions, which allowed us to be strongly represented.

Please find below the details of the events we organized and participated in during our New York visit between March 4-11, 2023.

Best regards,

EMİNE ERDEM

President of the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey

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- On the first day of their New York program, the KAGİDER delegation visited the office of the Turkish Consul General in New York, Ms. Reyhan Özgür. They shared detailed information about KAGİDER's projects, as well as discussed the aftermath of the

earthquake disaster that deeply affected the entire country and KAGİDER's plans to address it. The 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women is being held this year under the theme 'Empowering Women in the Digital Age through Entrepreneurship and Partnerships.' KAGİDER will continue to share updates and posts about their events and visits on their social media accounts.

- KAGİDER's General Secretary Yeşim Seviğ participated in a side event organized by W20 Indonesia, hosted by the Permanent Mission of Indonesia to the United Nations.
- The President of KAGİDER participated as a speaker at the official side event organized by the International Trade Center (ITC) and the Permanent Mission of the Commonwealth to the UN, emphasizing the importance of digitalization for women entrepreneurs and sharing KAGİDER's efforts in this regard.
- Members of the Turkish American Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TACCI), based in the United States, met with a delegation from the Turkish Women Entrepreneurs Association (KAGİDER) in New York. KAGİDER President Emine Erdem provided information on the association's activities and emphasized the important role of women entrepreneurs in reversing gender inequality. Erdem explained that their goal was not only to empower women economically but also socially and politically. She also mentioned that they were working in cooperation with international organizations, such as the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women, and that they were in New York for the UN meetings. Erdem also pointed out the recent earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş, stating that approximately 14 million people were affected and critical infrastructure was damaged. She emphasized that women and children were among the most affected and that KAGİDER would do their best to assist in the region's recovery and reconstruction. TACCI President Ali Koçak hosted the event, which was attended by various business and political leaders, including the New York Trade Attaché Filiz Köseyener, Linden Mayor Derek Armstead, and TACCI board members.
- KAGİDER President Emine Erdem and a delegation of KAGİDER members visited Permanent Representative of Türkiye to the United Nations, Sedat Önal. Details were discussed about the "Women of Trade" project that will be presented during the 67th Commission on the Status of Women, as well as the aftermath of the earthquake disaster and the work that KAGİDER plans to do in this regard. Information was shared about KAGİDER's national and international activities and events carried out within the last year.
- The United Nations (UN) holds annual meetings through the Commission on the Status of Women to promote gender equality and advocate for women's rights. This year, important topics were discussed that serve as a guide for countries and companies in the meetings following International Women's Day on March 8. As part of the UN Commission on the Status of Women sessions, a panel titled "Empowering Women Through Entrepreneurship in the Digital Age" was organized by the Turkish Women Entrepreneurs Association (KAGİDER) and Garanti BBVA. The event, moderated by the Director of the UN Women's Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (WEA), Meral Güzel, drew great interest from

business leaders, representatives of civil society organizations, and leading thinkers from around the world. In her opening speech, KAGİDER President Emine Erdem explained that the association has been working to empower women in their economic and social lives since its inception. Selin Öz, the Garanti BBVA SME Banking Manager, talked about their efforts to support women entrepreneurs and sustainability, stating that they believe economic development can be achieved by empowering women in their work and social lives. Begüm Mutuş, the Ambassador for the Yıldız Holding Women's Platform, highlighted the importance of the private sector opening doors to women entrepreneurs in their supply chains as the best way to support women in the workforce. Judith Fessehaie, Director of the International Trade Center's Women and Trade Program, emphasized the importance of women's participation in the business world to create a better work environment and talked about their efforts to help women entrepreneurs become more competitive and reach buyers. Virginia Littlejohn, Coordinator of the W20 Women's Entrepreneurship Working Group, talked about the importance of technology and artificial intelligence in supporting women's entrepreneurship. A moment of silence was held at the beginning of the event to honor those who lost their lives in earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş.

- The KAGİDER delegation visited the Vakıf Bank New York office, where the General Manager of Vakıf Bank USA and the team shared information about trade opportunities and practices in the United States with KAGİDER members.
- A networking meeting was held at the Turkish House(Turkevi Center) with the support of the Consulate General of the Republic of Turkey, which was attended by the New York President of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), Kim Avilez, and members of the NAWBO board, as well as the President of BPW, and representatives from the Oxfam Foundation.
- KAGİDER members met with the Inclusive Capitalism community, of which KAGİDER is the first NGO member from Turkey. The meeting focused on creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and trustworthy economic system. KAGİDER members shared their entrepreneurial journeys, detailed information about KAGİDER projects, and discussed the aftermath of the earthquake disaster that deeply affected the entire country and KAGİDER's planned work in this area.

The KAGİDER delegation attended a special event organized by the United Nations Women's Unit in the General Assembly Hall for International Women's Day on March 8th, representing Turkey with a group of 27 people. KAGİDER President Emine Erdem, Vice President Berrin Kuleli, Board Member Gülsün Zeytinoğlu, and Secretary General Yeşim Seviğ presented their projects aimed at supporting and empowering women entrepreneurs and women in the earthquake-affected region to UN Women executives during a meeting. Board members also met with the General Manager of the Turkish Philanthropy Foundation (TPF), of which KAGİDER is an approved NGO member, to discuss potential projects and international funding sources.