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PRESS RELEASE

07 May 2015

**LEATHER INDUSTRY CHALLENGES ESPRIT, PETA ‘CERTIFIED VEGAN LEATHER’ CLAIMS  
INDUSTRY GROUP ISSUES LETTER TO ESPRIT CEO**

The Global Leather Coordinating Committee (GLCC) recently issued an open letter to Mr. Jose Manuel Martínez Gutiérrez, Executive Director and CEO of Esprit Holdings Ltd., about his company’s endorsement of misleading claims made by the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) regarding the global leather manufacturing industry. Esprit has adopted PETA’s “Certified Vegan Leather” mark on a number of its footwear product lines, endorsing the claims the fringe group has made about production and manufacturing of leather globally.

In the letter (copy of letter is available [here](#)), the GLCC notes that animal hides and skins are an inevitable byproduct of global meat and dairy consumption, disputing allegations by the animal rights group that cattle, pigs and other food-producing animals are harvested purely for leather production. The recycling of hides and skins into leather articles represents the highest value utilisation of these byproducts.

“In a world where meat or dairy products continue to be consumed,” the letter notes, “there is a moral obligation by consumers to utilise all parts of the animal.”

Leather is a sustainable material based on natural, renewable resources. It has been produced by humans for thousands of years and continues to serve an important function in everything from fashion and footwear to auto manufacturing and upholstery.

### end press release ###

The GLCC is a coalition of the three leading international leather industry professional organisations formed to work on projects of common interest for the industry. The Committee represents the entire leather manufacturing value chain, from hides and skins producers and processors, to leather tanners, suppliers of chemicals, machinery, and services, researchers and scientists. Its mission is to maintain and enhance the position of leather as a valued sustainable component material for the benefit of consumers.