

Redress x United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network: Global Call for Fashion to Deliver on the SDGs

Fashion Designer activists unite during the United Nations General Assembly to spotlight the need to scale up diverse fashion brands supporting the Sustainable Development Goals



New York, NY – 29 September 2025 - **Redress**, the Asia-focused NGO accelerating circular fashion together with the **United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network (UNFLN)**, which plays a central role in advancing sustainable development by connecting industry stakeholders, media, governments, and United Nations entities, co-organised a high impact delegation and panel discussion of pioneering fashion designer activists, representing India, the Philippines and USA, within the SDG Media Zone at the United Nations General Assembly. With the mainstream global fashion industry generally failing to adopt adequate sustainable and ethical responses to fashion's polluting and harmful ways, as sustainability takes a backseat and industry executives prioritise other opportunities¹, the delegation called for support of established ethical and responsible fashion and lifestyle brands that already work to achieve multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in often far-reaching, developing world supply chains.

Fashion activists on the designer-led industry panel discussion, **Damini Mittai (India)**, **Jann Christian Lim Bungcaras (Philippines)** and **Isabella Li Kostrzewa (USA)**, discussed their works that are focused on key global fashion themes, including intersectional environmental justice, cultural identity, social inequality, gender inequality, overconsumption and textile waste colonialism.

"Fashion must be more than just creativity and commerce," said Dr. Christina Dean, Founder of Redress. "Fashion needs more of an ethical heart and soul to address our planetary challenges. There are countless inspiring brands globally making more than just clothes; they are making positive impacts at various Sustainable Development Goals. From consumers to investors, we must spotlight and empower these businesses to give them a rightful seat at the global fashion table."

Building momentum together: The United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network welcomes Redress' Alumni designers

This delegation and event collaboration signified Redress as a member of the United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network, the organisation that enables collaboration between industries and the United

¹ McKinsey & Company & Business of Fashion, The State of Fashion 2025

Nations system, accelerates innovation and knowledge sharing, and elevates the contributions of members driving positive impact worldwide that have significant global traction.

“As the United Nations Secretary-General reminded us on the International Day of Zero Waste, fashion must make good sense for both people and planet,” said Kerry Bannigan, Co-Founder of the United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network and President of the Board, PVBLC Foundation. “Fashion significantly influences numerous aspects of society, from employment and gender equality to innovation and cultural expression. The choices we make in this sector today profoundly affect the world we live in tomorrow.”

Redress’ global network of ethical fashion designers, who are Alumni of the world’s largest sustainable fashion design competition, the Redress Design Award, were outreached and supported in joining the UNFLN. The goal was to bring more fashion advocates, particularly those from Asia, into the UNFLN’s global network and to encourage industry stakeholders to demonstrate solutions and scale their impact. Through convenings, education and advocacy, Redress and UNFLN will continue to highlight sustainable practices and empower businesses to lead change.

Spotlighting Asia - and bringing more Asian designers into the network - is critical

Asia is pivotal in achieving fashion’s global sustainability efforts. Asia accounts for some 60% of global exports of garments and textiles², with approximately 60 million workers being employed in Asia’s garment manufacturing³. Asia is also hit hardest by climate change, with the region heating up faster than the global average⁴. Asia-focused Redress’ Alumni designers primarily come from Asia.

Damini Mittai, Founder and Designer, Koaka Collective, India, said “My work with marginalised female rural communities in India aims to foster sustainable livelihoods through skills-building and collective action, working against gender equality and the injustice of climate change.”

Jann Christian Lim Bungcaras, Founder, Creative Director and Designer, Jann Bungcaras Fashion House, Philippines, said “The Philippines is awash with a modern textile waste colonisation, from post consumer to industry waste, and as a developing country, we should not be seen as a dumping ground for waste.”

Isabella Li Kostrzewa, Artist, Isboko, USA, said “Here in my own country of USA, we have a gluttony of fashion overconsumption and we urgently need to inspire fashion consumers toward healthier fashion choices.”

Redress Alumni designers who have joined the UNFLN are: [Damini Mittai](#) (India), [Jann Bungcaras](#) (Philippines), [Isabella Li Kostrzewa](#) (USA), [Aashita Jain](#) (India), [Ruyin Tian](#) (China), [Aarushi Kilawat](#) (India), [Ruwanthi Gajadeera](#) (Sri Lanka); and from around the world [Livia Aguiar de Castro](#) (Brazil), [Louise Boase](#) (Australia), [Rachel Clowes](#) (UK), [Rose Brown](#) (UK), [Magdalena Malbran](#) (Argentina), and [Silvia Ación Parrilla](#) (Spain).

² World Trade Organisation, World Trade Statistical Review 2023

³ Labour Force Surveys, 2022

⁴ According to the United Nations and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Asia is hit hardest by climate change, with the region heating up faster than the global average.



Together, they represent a growing movement of ethical and responsible businesses showing that sustainable fashion can scale beyond individual projects into systemic industry transformation.

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Media Assets

High-resolution images are available [here](#).

Link to the three designers' bios [here](#).

About Redress:

Redress (www.redress.com.hk) is a Hong Kong-based, Asia-focused environmental NGO with a mission to accelerate the change to a circular fashion industry by educating and empowering designers and consumers so as to reduce clothing's negative environmental impacts.

One of their programmes, **The Redress Design Award** (www.redressdesignaward.com) is the world's leading sustainable fashion design competition that educates and empowers emerging fashion designers about circular design techniques to reduce fashion's negative environmental impacts. Organised by Redress since 2011, the competition partners with academic institutions globally and attracts designer applicants from over 50 countries and regions to win prizes that connect them with global-leading fashion businesses to accelerate the change to a circular fashion industry. Through this, the Redress Alumni Network unites 330+ rising and established fashion voices from across the world, spanning brand founders to visionary educators.

About the UN Fashion and Lifestyle Network

The United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network (unfashionlifestyle.org), an online platform hosted by the United Nations (UN), plays a key role in advancing sustainable development by connecting industry stakeholders, media, governments, and UN entities. The Network enables collaboration between industries and the UN system, accelerates innovation and knowledge sharing, and elevates the contributions of members driving positive impact worldwide. The United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network is a collaborative initiative of the United Nations Office for Partnerships, the Fashion Impact Fund, and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is a supporting partner of the Network.

Special thanks to leading global garment manufacturer TAL Apparel who generously supported the Redress Alumni delegation's trip to New York. Founded in 1947, TAL has established itself as a leading global garment manufacturer with a strong commitment to innovation, sustainability, and customer satisfaction. A trusted partner for fashion brands worldwide, TAL is proudly leading the transition to a sustainable future.