



PRESS RELEASE

## Ontex publishes its first Integrated Annual Report (2017)

Aalst-Erembodegem (Belgium), 05 April 2018 – Today, Ontex Group NV (“Ontex”) published its first Integrated Annual Report for the year 2017, combining both the annual and the sustainability reports and reflecting the company’s integrated strategy. The report showcases the Group’s 2017 highlights, including innovations launched in the past year, and shares an overview of the evolution of the Group’s sustainability ambitions.

The full integrated annual report can be downloaded [here](#).

### 2017 Financial Year Results

Ontex reported strong consumer demand in 2017, driving an outstanding top-line performance across all categories and reflecting Ontex’s unique ability to meet specific consumer and customer needs. 2017 was however a challenging year for Ontex. The Group faced elevated price pressure in many of the company’s key markets, the cost of raw materials increased and unfavorable currency movements; all affected profit margins.

**Charles Bouaziz, Ontex CEO:** *"Our teams delivered strong like-for-like revenue growth in 2017, ahead of our markets despite very competitive conditions. This growth is across all three categories. Nourishing local hero brands remained central and successful for Ontex. The Brazilian business acquired last year impacted overall group profitability, but it remains an important strategic move. By seizing this opportunity, we have established a firm foothold in an important market."*

2017 was a year of many firsts. Ontex passed the €2 billion revenue mark in 2017 for the first time, and outperformed the market again in terms of top-line growth. Another first is that more than 50% of Ontex’s revenue came from outside Western Europe, highlighting the Group’s increasing presence as an international player. Furthermore, the Group also made its first steps into Sub-Saharan Africa with the opening of a plant in Ethiopia; an example of their organic roll-out approach in new markets. Lastly, the Brazilian acquisition added impetus to Ontex’s geographical growth and furthered the company’s leading regional positions.

### 2017’s digital transformation

Over the past year, Ontex has started its digitalization program which will touch every part of the organization. It will positively impact manufacturing, help accelerate the share of e-commerce for customers, and also affect employees by offering growth opportunities. In manufacturing specifically, digitalization is all about data harvesting and analyses to improve safety, efficiency and the ability to adapt quickly and efficiently.

### Sustainability in three areas

Ontex’s focus on sustainability is centered on three strategic areas: products, people and planet. It is the Group’s ambition to integrate sustainability into all policies and activities of the

organization. The establishment of two new factories in Russia and Ethiopia, for example, were built in full compliance with the company's approach to sustainability and Ontex's aim to positively impact neighboring communities. The localization of each production facility not only created jobs, but in addition helped to reduce the environmental impacts of transportation.

Such expansion and localization across markets moreover, also comes with the great responsibility of understanding the local market and culture, and thus its people. This diversity at Ontex is what the company prides itself on and has driven success over the years.

In 2017, Ontex's safety performance on the shop floor improved substantially. The Group continues to have zero fatalities in any of its sites across the world, but a sharp 30% drop in accidents can be observed in 2017 as well, together with a strong decrease (50%) in the severity rate of these accidents.

### **Outlook 2018**

Looking forward, Ontex has detailed three strategic priorities for 2018. Firstly, Ontex will continue investing in initiatives which support sustainable profitable growth. Secondly, the Group will further strengthen Ontex's underlying business by continuing to build on its leadership position in retailer brands in Europe and on the Group's portfolio of local brands. Thirdly, Ontex aims to build its initiative to achieve sustainable improvements in the Ontex Brazil business.

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To retrieve the Integrated Annual Report for 2017, Ontex has created a dedicated webpage on their website: <http://www.ontexglobal.com/integrated-report-2017>. The main facts and figures on Ontex, the full report and the different chapters for download can be found on that page.

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### **About Ontex**

Ontex is a leading international provider of personal hygiene solutions, with expertise in baby care, feminine care and adult care. Ontex's innovative products are distributed in more than 110 countries through Ontex brands such as BBTips, BioBaby, Pompom, Bigfral, Canbebe, Canped, ID and Serenity, as well as leading retailer brands.

Employing 11,000 passionate people all over the world, Ontex has 19 manufacturing sites and 29 sales and marketing offices in 22 countries, with its headquarters in Aalst, Belgium. Ontex is part of the Bel20 and STOXX® Europe 600. To keep up with the latest news, visit [www.ontexglobal.com](http://www.ontexglobal.com) or follow us on [LinkedIn](#).