

## **Annick De Poorter elected 'Engineer of the Year'**

**Aalst-Erembodegem (Belgium), 28.05.2018.** Today, Annick De Poorter – R&D, Quality and Sustainability Director of the Ontex Group – received the 'Engineer of the Year' award during a ceremony at Ghent City Hall. The award was given out by the Faculty of Engineering Sciences of Ghent University and its alumni association AIG (Alumni Engineers UGent), to highlight outstanding innovative work.

### **'Engineer of the Year' Award**

The 'Engineer of the Year' award is a new initiative by the AIG and celebrates annually a distinctive alumnus or alumna who accomplished a significant innovation or achievement in his or her organization. A jury, composed of experienced colleagues from the industry and academic world, selected the winner from a large pool of nominations. The final winner Annick De Poorter was elected by a large majority of the jury. The 'Engineer of the Year' award is a recognition of her continuous focus on innovation and her work at Ontex.

**Charles Bouaziz – CEO of Ontex:** *"We are very proud that "our" Annick has received this award. It acknowledges her career as an engineer but also the ambitious innovation program she has been leading at Ontex."*

### **Ontex's strive for innovation**

The launch of Ontex's new range of organic tampons in 2017 is a good illustration of how Annick and her team at Ontex are driven by innovation. Guided by an increasing trend in consumer's environmental awareness, Annick and her team developed a new tampon range made entirely out of organic cotton and bio-plastic applicators based on sugar cane. Another strong focus at Ontex is the development of increasingly thinner absorption cores, without sacrificing absorbency and comfort. In that respect, Annick and her team helped launching a thinner diaper in Europe, Turkey, Mexico, which is more comfortable for the baby yet offers the same absorbency. Also a lighter version of an incontinence pad was created last year under the iD brand - one of Ontex's main incontinence brands.

**Annick De Poorter:** *"All these types of innovation ensure sustainability, the use of fewer materials and more efficient logistics, and is therefore a win-win situation for both the consumer and the company. This obviously gives me as an engineer a lot of satisfaction"*

### **About Annick De Poorter**

Annick graduated as a Civil Engineer in Textiles at the University of Ghent in 1995, and started her career as a researcher at the university in the Faculty of Engineering, Department of Textiles. At the end of 1996 she moved on from the university lab to the factory, and started working at Libeltex NV, producer of nonwovens. In 2003 it was time for Ontex, where she was hired as the R&D Manager for women's hygiene products. Since 2006 she has a seat in the management committee of Ontex as R&D Manager of the Group and three years later in 2009, she became the R&D & Quality Director of

the Group. In 2010, Sustainability was added to her list of responsibilities. Ontex has undergone a major evolution in the past 15 years, which Annick was able to experience and steer from close by.

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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, Bigfrol, Canbebe, Canped, ID and Serenity, as well as leading retailer brands.

Employing 11,000 passionate people all over the world, Ontex has a presence in 22 countries, with its headquarters in Aalst, Belgium. Ontex is part of the Bel20 and STOXX® Europe 600.

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