

Rise & Lead announces Changemaker Award winners

Inaugural honourees: Samira Rafaela, Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen

THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS, September 11, 2023 / EINPresswire.com/ -- [Rise & Lead Women](#) is delighted to announce Member of the European Parliament [Samira Rafaela](#) and longtime insurance executive [Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen](#) as the winners of the inaugural Rise & Lead Changemaker Awards.

These awards recognise leaders whose actions have created opportunities and found solutions to drive greater diversity, equity and inclusion in organisations and society at large.

“With these inaugural Changemaker Awards, we are proud to highlight Samira Rafaela and Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen as inspiring leaders,” said Rise & Lead Founder and President Ebere Akadiri. “Each of them has, in their different ways, challenged the status quo and made clear that an individual’s actions can deliver results,” she added. “They have enabled more perspectives to gain influence and make structures more representative of their constituent populations.”

“

I deeply appreciate this award, because Rise & Lead Women is an organisation that gives space for women to discover and develop their leadership qualities,”
Samira Rafaela

Samira Rafaela is a Member of the European Parliament – the first Dutch Afro-Caribbean MEP, and one of the youngest MEPs elected in 2019. Samira is the Coordinator for the Renew Europe political group on the Committee on International Trade. She has been named by Politico as one of 20 “MEPs to Watch” for her contributions to making



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Rise & Lead Change Maker Award

trade more fair and green. In 2020, Samira was named International Woman of the Year by Harper's Bazaar. She is also the Co-President of the parliament's Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI), where she is at the forefront of mainstreaming racial equality in the parliament and beyond. Additionally, she is a member of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, where she is pushing for ground-breaking legislation to close the gender pay gap.

"I deeply appreciate this award because Rise & Lead Women is an organisation that gives space for women to discover and develop their leadership qualities," said Rafaela. "I applaud their work, which is important for us to advance and reach our potential as a society."



Changemaker Award Honouree: Samira Rafaela, Member of the European Parliament

Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen retired this year as Chairman of the Executive Board of Aon Holdings & Aon Group International BV, following a 33-year career. In 2018, Soeteman-Reijnen organised the first Dutch edition of the Dive In Festival, the insurance industry's annual festival focused on diversity and inclusion. At the end of 2019, she became Chair of the Advisory Board of SER Topvrouwen. She was one of the driving forces behind the "Balanced Distribution M/F Act", which includes a gender quota in leadership positions of the approximately 100 Dutch publicly listed companies. The law contains a target and transparency obligation for the Netherlands' 5,000 'large' companies.

"I'm especially thrilled to receive this recognition from Rise & Lead Women because I have seen the organisation go from strength to strength from its earliest days," said Soeteman-Reijnen. "Thanks to Ebere and her team, I've met many inspiring leaders."

The Rise & Lead Awards are presented in the context of the sixth annual Rise & Lead Summit, held 14-15 September at the NH Hotel in The Hague, The Netherlands.

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About Rise & Lead Women:

Rise & Lead Women is an international organisation in the Netherlands that champions women's

leadership and financial inclusion in workplaces and the marketplace. It was founded in 2018 by female entrepreneur Ebere Akadiri. Through our sponsorship of events, webinars, and mentoring sessions, we connect aspiring leaders with experienced business executives to explore topics essential to professional growth and development.

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Changemaker Award Honouree: Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen, Former Chairman of the Executive Board of Aon Holdings B.V. and Chair of the Advisory Board of SER Topvrouwen

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