Inditex shareholders back heiress Marta Ortega as chairwoman

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Shareholders of Spanish fashion retail giant Inditex on Tuesday approved Marta Ortega, the youngest daughter of its founder Amancio, as the group’s chairperson, alongside a new chief executive officer, Oscar Garcia Maceiras.

The vote backing the duo took place during the first annual general meeting since 38-year-old Ortega started in her new role as non-executive chair in April, the final step in a generational handover that began a decade ago.

The transition comes as the world’s largest fast fashion retailer and Zara brand owner has suspended operations in Russia, its second-largest market in terms of shops, and faces significant inflationary pressures around the world.

Inditex raised its prices at the start of the year and reported an 80% jump in first-quarter profit amid soaring sales as consumers refreshed their wardrobes after months at home during pandemic lockdowns.

"The sense of responsibility is immense (...) We have confidence in the future, we are sure that Inditex's innovation capacity will allow us to grow as a company," Ortega said in her first public event since she took the post.

"Inditex is the place where I have always wanted to be (...)with the talent and responsibility of all my colleagues we will be ready to face the challenges that the future will bring us," Ortega added to close her speech.

The Inditex founder owns 59.2% of Inditex shares.

The company's CEO told shareholders it would continue to monitor the situation in Russia and would keep operations suspended for the time being.

Inditex has hired more than 500 refugees from Ukraine in 22 countries, Garcia Maceiras added.
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Shareholders also approved an agreement with former executive chairman Pablo Isla not to work for a competitor for two years.

From this year, the Ortega heiress will receive an annual remuneration of one million euros for her work as a non-executive chair and head of an internal audit body, while also remaining involved in managing fashion merchandise at Zara, the business that generates 70% of Inditex revenues.

Shareholders also approved the board's proposal of a dividend distribution this year of 0.93 euros per share against 2021 results.