

## **Martin Sorrell full statement**

*For the past 33 years, I have spent every single day thinking about the future of WPP.*

*Over those decades, our family has grown and prospered.*

*We welcomed J. Walter Thompson, Ogilvy, Young & Rubicam, Grey, 24/7 Real Media, Taylor Nelson Sofres, among so many others.*

*We created GroupM, including Xaxis and Essence.*

*We put the focus on Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East and Central Eastern Europe, the home of the next billion consumers. We embarked on the early development of digital capabilities; and the evolution of a firm-wide integrated client and country-centered approach.*

*Our holding company was recognized as the world's best and most effective through the Cannes Lions and Effie Awards year after year after year.*

*We pioneered Atticus Awards for original written thinking.... the WPP Fellowship Awards to recognize promising talent.... the Partnership and Practice Awards for client endorsed integrated market and case studies.*

*Our Stream digital conferences have attracted the best in the digital business for more than a decade.*

*Our Annual Sustainability and Pro Bono Reports highlight the unique social, environmental and public policy work that we do day in, day out across the globe.*

*As I look ahead, I see that the current disruption we are experiencing is simply putting too much unnecessary pressure on the business, our over 200,000 people and their 500,000 or so dependents, and the clients we serve in 112 countries.*

*That is why I have decided that in your interest, in the interest of our clients, in the interest of all shareowners, both big and small, and in the interest of all our other stakeholders, it is best for me to step aside.*

*We have had a succession plan in place for some time. A new generation of management, led by Mark Read and Andrew Scott (who have each been at WPP for approximately 20 years), are well qualified and experienced in the Board's opinion, to deal with the geographic and technological opportunities and challenges our industry faces.*

*We have weathered difficult storms in the past. And our highly talented people have always won through, always.*

*Nobody, either direct competitors or newly-minted ones can beat the WPP team, as long as you work closely together, whether by client and/or country or digitally.*

*In the coming period, I will be available to the Board and any of you, should you want help with anything, anywhere. I shall miss all of you greatly. You have given me such excitement and energy and I wanted to thank you for everything you have done and will do for WPP and me.*

*As some of you know, my family has expanded recently, WPP will always be my baby too.*

*As a Founder, I can say that WPP is not just a matter of life or death, it was, is and will be more important than that. Good fortune and Godspeed to all of you...now Back to the Future.*

*Thank you*