

SECOND ANNUAL FORUM ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Implementing the UN Guiding Principles: Regional trends, challenges and opportunities

Lunch hour side events hosted by the UN Working Group

Co-sponsored by the Governments of Argentina, Ghana, India, Norway, and the Russian Federation

2 December, 12:00-14:30

Palais des Nations

Summary

The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights for implementing the UN “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework are the first UN-endorsed framework to define the respective duties and responsibilities of Governments and business enterprises for preventing and addressing adverse human rights impacts arising from business activities. In its resolution 17/4, The Human Rights Council in 2011 unanimously endorsed the Guiding Principles and established the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights with a mandate to promote the dissemination and comprehensive implementation of the Principles world-wide.

Contributing to strengthening and deepening dissemination of the Guiding Principles in all regions is a key strategic goal for the Working Group and core to its mandate. The Working Group considers that such efforts need to take into account the realities and needs of local contexts, in order to gain a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities for advancing towards effective implementation. Against this backdrop the Working Group decided to pursue organization of regional fora on business and human rights. The first such regional forum led by the Working Group was held for the Latin American and Caribbean region in August 2013.¹ Plans for an African regional forum in 2014 are currently being explored.

The Working Group also decided that a regional perspective on trends, implementation practices, challenges and opportunities should be one of the focus areas for the second annual Forum on Business and Human Rights.

With the support of the Governments of Argentina, Ghana, India, Norway and Russia, the Working Group is hosting a pre-Forum side event featuring discussions focused on each of the UN regions. These discussions will give stakeholders the opportunity to learn about key trends in the region and engage with the Working Group to discuss experiences of challenges, opportunities and lessons learned specific to the region.

¹ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Forum/Pages/2013LACRegionalForumBusinessandHumanRights.aspx>

Objectives of the side events

- Identify key trends, challenges and opportunities for dissemination and implementation of the Guiding Principles in the five UN regions
- Promote multistakeholder dialogue and exchanges of lessons learned and perspectives on implementation of the Guiding Principles in all the five regions
- Feed into the 3 December official plenary panel focused on enhancing involvement of all regions in the business and human rights agenda and implementation of the Guiding Principles
- Provide a platform for Forum participants from the respective regions to engage with the Working Group
- Facilitate informal exchanges and networking among stakeholders from or working in the respective regions

Venue

Palais des Nations, Rooms IX, XI, XXI, XXII, XXIII

General agenda outline

12:00-12:45 Informal networking / sandwich lunch and light refreshments

12:45-13:00 Welcome remarks

13:00-13:20 Introduction – Briefing on key regional trends

13:20-14:20 Multistakeholder dialogue on implementation practices, lessons learned, challenges and opportunities

14:20-14:30 Wrap-up and comments by the Working Group

Participation

The side sessions are open to all Forum participants. No pre-registration for the side sessions is required. Note: Registration is required for participation in the Forum. Please refer to

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Forum/Pages/2013FBHRRegistration.aspx>

Side event Room XI

Regional focus on UN Guiding Principles dissemination and implementation: Asia

Chair by Dr. Makarim Wibisono, Chairperson of the Forum on Business and Human Rights

12:00-12:45 Informal networking / sandwich lunch and light refreshments

12:45-13:00 Welcome remarks by Puvan Selvanathan, UN Working Group, and the chair

13:00-13:25 Introduction – Briefing on key regional trends

- Lowell Chow, East Asia Researcher & Representative, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
- Delphia Lim, Associate Fellow, Asian Business & Rule of Law Initiative, Singapore Management University School of Law
- Hiroshi Ishida, Executive Director, Caux Roundtables Japan

13:25-14:20 Multistakeholder dialogue on implementation practices, lessons learned, challenges and opportunities

14:20-14:30 Wrap-up and comments by the Working Group

Side event Room XXII

Regional focus on UN Guiding Principles dissemination and implementation: Africa

Chaired by H.E. Abdul Samad Minty, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations and other International Organisations at Geneva

12:00-12:45 Informal networking / sandwich lunch and light refreshments

12:45-13:00 Welcome remarks by Michael K. Addo, UN Working Group, and the chair

13:00-13:20 Introduction – Briefing on key regional trends

- Joseph Kibugu, East Africa Researcher and Representative, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
- Pierre Sané, Co-Chair UN Global Compact Human Rights Working Group and former Secretary General Amnesty International
- Lazare Ki-Zerbo, Program Lead, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie

13:20-14:20 Multistakeholder dialogue on implementation practices, lessons learned, challenges and opportunities

14:20-14:30 Wrap-up and comments by the Working Group

Interpretation in English and French available

Side event Room IX

Regional focus on UN Guiding Principles dissemination and implementation: Eastern Europe

Chaired by Mr. Andrey Nikiforov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

12:00-12:45 Informal networking / sandwich lunch and light refreshments

12:45-13:00 Welcome remarks by Pavel Sulyandziga, UN Working Group, and the chair

13:00-13:20 Introduction – Briefing on key regional trends

- Ella Skybenko, Eastern Europe & Central Asia Researcher & Representative, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre

13:20-14:20 Multistakeholder dialogue on implementation practices, lessons learned, challenges and opportunities

14:20-14:30 Wrap-up and comments by the Working Group

Interpretation in Russian and English available

Side event Room XXIII

Regional focus on UN Guiding Principles dissemination and implementation: Latin America and the Caribbean

Chaired by Ms. Miriam Chaves, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations Office at Geneva

12:00-12:45 Informal networking / sandwich lunch and light refreshments

12:45-13:00 Welcome remarks by Alexandra Guáqueta, UN Working Group, and the chair

13:00-13:20 Introduction – Briefing on key regional trends

- Mauricio Lazala, Deputy Director, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
- Dante Pesce, CEO at VINCULAR Center for Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development

13:20-14:20 Multistakeholder dialogue on implementation practices, lessons learned, challenges and opportunities

14:20-14:20 Wrap-up and comments by the Working Group

Interpretation in Spanish and English available

Side event Room XXI

Regional focus on UN Guiding Principles dissemination and implementation: Western Europe and Other Countries

Chaired by H.E. Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations and other international organisations in Geneva

12:00-12:45 Informal networking / sandwich lunch and light refreshments

12:45-13:00 Welcome remarks by Margaret Jungk, UN Working Group, and the chair

13:00-13:20 Introduction – Briefing on key regional trends

- Eniko Horvath, Europe Researcher, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre

13:20-14:20 Multistakeholder dialogue on implementation practices, lessons learned, challenges and opportunities

14:20-14:30 Wrap-up and comments by the Working Group