

2 December

11:30-13:00
Assembly Hall

High-level discussion during the opening plenary of the Forum

High-level discussion: Global outlook for business and human rights - Key themes, drivers, trends, challenges

Several reputable surveys are being carried out with the aim to assess how business leaders perceive corporate and State responsibilities to protect and respect human rights, as well as attempting to map implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This session will reflect on the data and analysis resulting from these various surveys, and attempt to situate these in the broader global context of evolving expectations on business. Panellists will discuss relevant pressures, drivers, trends and challenges in this area, and explore how States and business are currently meeting their respective duties and responsibilities to prevent and address human rights abuse, as well as what more needs to be done.

Among the survey data that will inform this discussion are the following: Economist Intelligence Unit research project on the role of business with regard to human rights (with input and support from the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights); the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre's project concerning Government actions on business and human rights; the UN Global Compact's annual survey of efforts by its member companies to implement the Global Compact principles (which include commitment to respect human rights); and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's survey to assess its member companies' implementation of the Guiding Principles).

Some of the key questions to be addressed by the speakers:

- *What are new drivers and incentives for uptake of the UN Guiding Principles? What developments could make uptake more difficult?*
- *Which type of companies are currently integrating the responsibility to respect? Is it mainly larger transnational corporations?*
- *What trends are we seeing for Governments in this area - is it only a small group of States that are taking steps to implement the Guiding Principles?*
- *What are the drivers for supply chain responsibility?*
- *Is there a tendency towards increased partnership and more collaborative approaches in supply chains and between different actors?*
- *Are international investment and trade agreements addressing these issues?*
- *How is the uptake of the Guiding Principles in emerging markets, both by Governments and by the increasingly stronger business sector?*

*Moderator: **Georg Kell**, Executive Director, UN Global Compact*

*Introduction: **Margaret Jungk**, UN Working Group*

*Survey presentation: **Monica Woodley**, Editorial Director, Economist Intelligence Unit*

Panel:

***Jayati Ghosh**, Professor of Economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University*

***Morten Høglund**, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway*

***Rajiv Joshi**, Managing Director, The B Team*

***Lisa Misol**, Senior Advisor on Business and Human Rights, Human Rights Watch*

***Edgar Tung**, Managing Director, Group Human Resources, Organization Development and Communications, Esquel Group*

***Brent Wilton**, Secretary General, International Organisation of Employers*