



Promoting inclusion and countering anti-migrant narratives: the role of business

Parallel session

27 November

13.30-14.45

Organized by OHCHR

Background: Today, migration is the subject of highly polarised debates in the media, in political circles and in public discussions. Xenophobic and racist messages against migrants, as well as racial, ethnic, religious and nationality-based discrimination have increasingly permeated the public sphere in many countries. Migrants are being demonised and vilified, and used as scapegoats for deep-seated – and often unrelated - fears about terrorism and security, crime, unemployment, the viability of welfare systems and other aspects of globalization. This has also resulted in rising violence against and exclusion of migrants and ethnic and religious minorities associated with migration.

Business is in many ways at the heart of the debate on migration and xenophobia. Private sector companies have at times been vocal in challenging racism, exclusion and discrimination, as well as in promoting diversity and inclusion. Advertisers are facing pressure to redirect their marketing expenditure away from publications accused of fuelling hatred towards migrants as a means of boosting sales and advertising revenue, and towards those that report accurately and fairly. The public voice of business raised in defence of welcoming and inclusive societies can have a powerful preventive impact.

Against this backdrop, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and Stop Funding Hate, are hosting a session during the 2017 United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights which aims to discuss practical ways in which business can play a role in countering anti-migrant sentiment and promoting a public discourse on migration which is based in evidence and built on the shared values of the human rights framework.

Objectives: The principal objectives of the side event are to:

- Identify what role business can play and learn from experiences in the business community on how to challenge anti-migrant narratives and to promote positive, inclusive messages;
- Recognise ways in which the tools provided by the international human rights framework can be useful;
- Explore how multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives can galvanise and engage communities to stand up for migrants' human rights.

Participants: The side event seeks to bring together the private sector, government and civil society actors as well as other relevant stakeholders including UN entities and national human rights institutions.

Speakers and moderators:

Moderator: Peggy Hicks - Director TESPRDD, OHCHR

Speakers:

Richard Wilson - Stop Funding Hate

Chris Gale, Ben&Jerry's

Lorenz Isler - IKEA

Irit Tamir – Oxfam

ANNEX. SPEAKERS SHORT BIOS.

Peggy Hicks, Director of the Research and Right to Development Division, OHCHR

Since January 2016, Peggy Hicks has served as director of the Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development Division of the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR). She provides strategic direction to the UN Human Rights Office's work on a broad range of pressing human rights issues, including human rights in the digital age. From 2005 to 2015, she was global advocacy director at Human Rights Watch, where she was responsible for managing Human Rights



Watch's advocacy team and providing direction to its advocacy worldwide. Ms. Hicks previously served as the director of the Office of Returns and Communities in the UN mission in Kosovo and as Deputy High Representative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She has also worked as the Director of Programs for the International Human Rights Law Group, and as clinical professor of human rights and refugee law at the University of Minnesota Law School. Ms. Hicks is a graduate of Columbia Law School and the University of Michigan. **Twitter:** *@hickspeggy*

Chris Gale

Social Mission Strategy Manager



Chris worked for 7 years on issues surrounding education and skills development in Ghana, India and South Africa. He then transitioned into working more closely on how business can drive social impact, spending time at both Ben & Jerry's and Marks & Spencer. Before moving back to Ben & Jerry's full time where he heads up their social mission strategy in Europe and the development of the Ben & Jerry's Foundation, which provides grants to refugee and asylum seeker led organisations in the UK.

Richard Wilson

Human rights activist and co-founder of the Stop Funding Hate campaign



Launched in August 2016, the campaign seeks to make hate unprofitable, and promote the idea of 'ethical advertising' by persuading companies to pull advertising from newspapers that incite hatred against minority groups. In response to the campaign, a number of brands - including Lego and the Body Shop have ended their partnerships with the UK's Daily Mail - a newspaper previously been cited by the OHCHR for its "unique" hostility towards migrants.

Lorenz Isler

Sustainability Manager at IKEA

Lorenz Isler is Sustainability Manager at IKEA Switzerland. He joined IKEA in August 2013. He previously worked at Microsoft Switzerland with sustainability and Accenture within consulting. He has a Master of Arts in International Relations from the University of St.Gallen (HSG).



Irit Tamir

Advocacy Manager, Private Sector Department



Irit Tamir is the Advocacy Manager for Oxfam America's Private Sector Department. In her role, she is focused on working with companies to ensure that their business practices result in positive social and environmental impacts for vulnerable communities throughout the world. Irit oversees the advocacy and campaigns work focused on corporate behavior. Most recently, she served as the policy lead for Oxfam International's Behind the Brands campaign.