



*Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès des Nations
Unies et auprès des institutions spécialisées à Genève*

2018 United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights

**Progress on the implementation of the UNGP
26th November - 15:00 - 16:20**

Statement by Belgium

Mr. President,

Belgium is pleased to participate in this year's Forum on Business and Human Rights and thanks the Working Group on the issue of Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises for its relentless efforts to promote the dissemination and implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Belgium would like to share the following update regarding the implementation of its National Action Plan on Business & Human Rights and refers to its written submission for a complete overview.

The Belgian government recently developed **an online toolbox** to inform organisations on how they can comply with their human rights duties and, in case of an adverse human rights impact, how they can redress or compensate victims.

Part of the toolbox is also **a brochure** that lists existing national remedy mechanisms and provides pragmatic answers on how to ensure effective access to remedy for victims of human rights violations. The brochure was updated in the course of 2018 and is available online in 4 languages.

Complementary to the remedy brochure, a study was commissioned to the University of Antwerp to draft a report that makes a series of recommendations to **eliminate obstacles** to an effective remedy in Belgium. The study was finalized in the second half of 2018.

Belgium lived up to its commitment to raise companies' awareness on human rights during **economic missions** abroad. Hence, we organized seminars on child labour in the cocoa sector, on social dialogue and on women empowerment through entrepreneurship during our past three Belgian economic missions.

Belgium continues to encourage **responsible supply chain management** using a sectoral approach:

- The Belgian Federal Government organized a series of round tables with the **Belgian chocolate sector** and NGO's to work on a joint agenda to integrate sustainability in the Belgian chocolate industry;
- The Belgian OECD NCP organized several awareness-raising events to address the sectoral developments regarding due diligence in relation to OECD activities in the **agricultural, financial, textile and minerals sector as well as on corruption**;
- At this very moment, the Flemish Government is organising a conference in Brussels on **transparency in the value chain** via innovative technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence, to allow to link efficiency to transparency.

Belgium remains fully engaged to implement the UNGPs and to execute the actions in its NAP, which we will continue to evaluate in close cooperation with all stakeholders, civil society included.

I thank you, Mr. President