

# BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE REPORT

## MACRO TRENDS, MICRO REALITIES AND WAYS FORWARD

24 May 2010, Bogota, Colombia



GLOBAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE  
ON HUMAN RIGHTS



Institute for  
Human Rights and Business



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Centro Regional de Apoyo para  
América Latina y el Caribe



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**Francisco Santos, Vice-President, Colombia**

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**Bennett Freeman, Senior Vice President, Sustainability Research and Policy, Calvert Investments and Former US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor**

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*“It’s fair to say few democracies have faced such grave human rights challenges as Colombia over last two decades. Colombia has been a laboratory for the key issues that business has to address with respect to its roles and responsibilities when it comes to human rights ... I think Colombia is emerging not only as an example of serious problems but more positively as a model for innovative solutions.”*

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**Angela Rivas Gamboa, Head of Business and Peace Building, Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP)**

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*“Emerging issues in Colombia for business include land, which for many is the core of the conflict in Colombia. More specifically, internal forced displacement, the volume of abandoned land, and informality in land tenure are relevant here. Companies are now facing the effects of a series of unresolved issues regarding land tenure in the midst of multiple conflicts that so often have resorted to violence.”*

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**Carlos Franco, Director of the Vice-President’s Office Programme on Human Rights**

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*“We have to overcome the idea that human rights is simply a declaration of principles – that it is a declarative issue or a way to put out fires. Those opinions have to be overcome and we must understand that human rights are a question of the culture of the business”*



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## INTRODUCTION

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Since the 1990s, corporations have been faced with an increasingly rigorous and intense imperative to earn their license to operate from a range of stakeholders. Business leaders around the world now realise that responsible and sustainable business is far beyond legal compliance and philanthropy.

Issues finding their way into Colombian boardrooms include opposition to land use and acquisition by industry, competition over scarce natural resources, operating in conflict affected areas, creating diverse and dynamic work forces, accessing new markets and sources of capital, and achieving sustainable labor relations.

In this context, companies in all industries are seeing that international human rights offer a highly practical and socially legitimate framework for corporate responsibility. This approach can enable business to align themselves with international policy norms, multinational and national regulatory frameworks, the aspirations of employees and workers, the creation of a socially sustainable business environment, new business opportunities and the diverse lives of stakeholders.

On 24 May 2010 an event was organised by the Fundación Ideas Para La Paz, the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI), El Centro Regional para América Latina y el Caribe en apoyo del Pacto Mundial de las Naciones Unidas and the Institute for Human Rights and Business to address the topic of business and human rights. The event aimed to offer business leaders from all sectors the chance to:

- Understand the macro trends, drivers and imperatives for integrating human rights into business strategy and management
- Hear how corporate respect for human rights has led to practical and efficient responses to social and environmental challenges
- Identify shared needs and strategies to play a stronger role in the national, regional and international debate on human rights in a business context.

The group of 64 participants and speakers on the day included Senior Business Leaders (44 participants), the Colombian Government (6 representatives), the United Nations (4 representatives), and Civil Society (10).

## REGIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE CONTEXT

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Since the 1990s, corporations have been faced with an increasingly rigorous and intense imperative to earn their license to operate from a range of stakeholders. Business leaders around the world now realize that responsible and sustainable business is far beyond legal compliance and philanthropy. Issues finding their way into Colombian boardrooms include opposition to land use and acquisition by industry, competition over scarce natural resources, operating in conflict affected areas, creating diverse and dynamic workforces, accessing new markets and sources of capital, and achieving sustainable labour relations.

In this context, companies in all industries are seeing that international human rights offer a highly practical and socially legitimate framework for corporate responsibility. This approach can enable business to align themselves with international policy norms, multinational and national regulatory frameworks, the



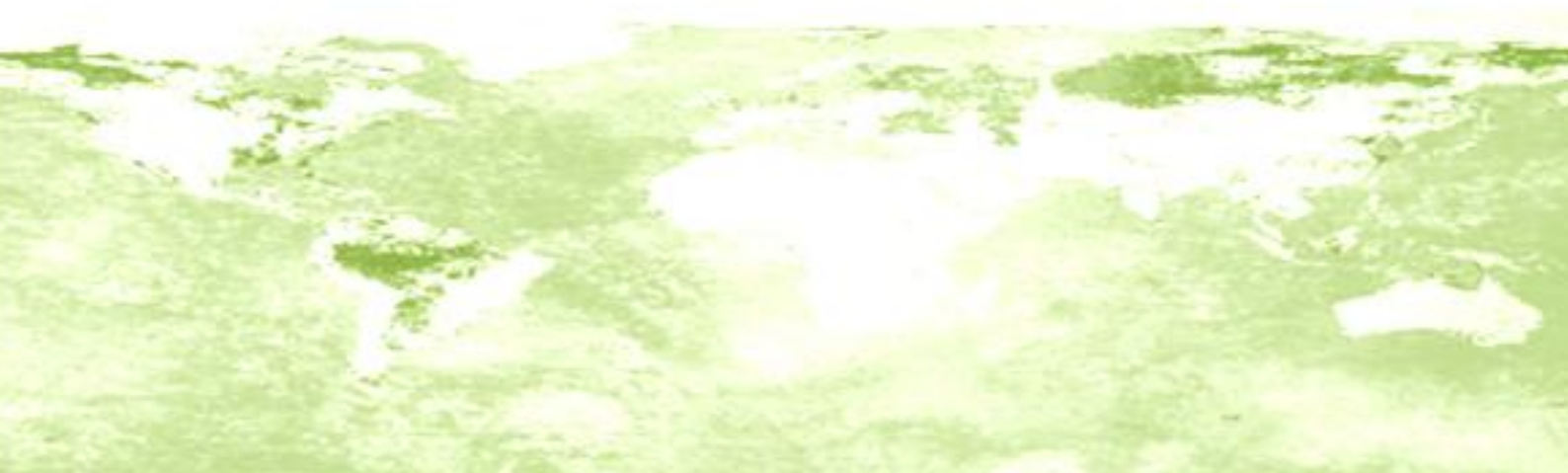
aspirations of employees and workers, the creation of a socially sustainable business environment, new business opportunities and the diverse lives of stakeholders.

## GLOBAL CONTEXT

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In all countries around the world, an essential part of the individual and collective corporate responsibility journey is the interface with emerging international frameworks and approaches, such as the UN Global Compact, the Global Reporting Initiative and the Millennium Development Goals. Such interaction contributes to fostering a vision of an ethical, fair and sustainable globalization that works for all.

The past decade has seen increased consensus, clarity and commitment about human rights in a business context. This is due to many major corporations seeing the clear, long-term business case for respecting human rights, including improved risk management; improved compliance; efficiency gains; reduced operational disruption; sustained license to operate; new business models; and access to capital and markets. As well as escalating commitment to the UN Global Compact – where human and labour rights content is strong – companies all over the world have practices to share that relate to human rights (even if they are not labelled as such).



## THE UN PROTECT, RESPECT, REMEDY FRAMEWORK

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The work of the UN SRSG Professor John Ruggie has also been instrumental in building momentum in this area of corporate responsibility. The audience at the Roundtable heard an explanation of the three pillars of the Protect, Respect and Remedy framework and were able to pose questions to his UN Special Advisor Gerald Pachoud about the framework. The following excerpts are taken from an interview with Professor Ruggie.<sup>1</sup>

### The State Duty to Protect

*“When States sign up to international human treaties they take on certain obligations. The obligations vary in the precise language depending on whether it is the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, or whether it’s an anti-discrimination Convention ... there is one common element in human rights law that all states sign up to - and that is that they will ensure the enjoyment of those rights of people within their jurisdiction or within their territory....Ensuring the enjoyment of rights means that States promise to protect people within their jurisdiction from abuse not only by the states themselves, but by third parties. That includes business. States know that they have this legal duty, but because the issue is relatively new they haven’t fully thought through what the implications are. We’ve worked with States to help think through what the implications are.”*

### The Corporate Responsibility to Respect

*“Currently under international human rights law companies don’t have legal duties. If there is one norm that enjoys universal acceptance even by companies themselves it is that companies have the responsibility to respect rights which means not interfering with the rights of others as they go about their business. Every voluntary initiative that companies have adopted, ILO conventions, OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, etc recognise and affirm that companies have a responsibility to respect human rights. So what we’ve done there is to say ‘ok we take you at your word that you respect human rights, but how do you know you respect human rights? Do you actually have systems in place that would allow you to demonstrate to yourselves let alone anyone else’.”*

### Access to Remedy

*“No system of prevention is perfect – things are going to go wrong: you need remedies for when they do and there we’ve examined voluntary grievance mechanisms that companies can set up themselves, particularly large footprint companies that have a big impact in communities....Why would they want to do that? Because most major human rights violations didn’t start out that way, we discovered – they start out as minor grievances that get ignored, and if a company had a mechanism, a place where the community could come with their grievances, they could head off the escalation of minor grievances into major confrontations that may lead to major human rights violations....But then of course, there’s the state side, and that has to do with judicial systems and access to judicial systems. The access part is horrendously difficult for the kinds of victims that you typically see in this area, who are either workers – where freedom of association is forbidden, they don’t have built-in grievance mechanisms, there’s no state labour inspector they can complain to; there ought to be the judicial or quasi-judicial mechanisms – or you’re talking about poor communities, indigenous communities, for example, who don’t have access to the kind of law firms that, in fact, I’ve been privileged to have access to.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Quotations from Professor John Ruggie replicated with the kind permission of the International Bar Association from: <http://www.ibanet.org/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=422B3B1F-4C73-4500-B8E1-1D45EA992A71>



# THEMES

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## THEME ONE - CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

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The unique challenges and responses to human rights issues for businesses in Colombia, and Colombia as an emerging model for business and human rights solutions. As part of this, the shift from philanthropic corporate activities to addressing accountability, in corporate structures and with concrete steps and commitment by the Government and business.

## THEME TWO - THE BUSINESS CASE

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There is a need for a level playing field by all actors. Also, the need to expand the vision of business and human rights in Colombia beyond, and make advances in, the non-extractive sectors (noting the constitutional definition given under Articles 33 and 34 and the development of the Colombian Guidelines ([www.business-humanrights.org/Documents/Guias Colombia](http://www.business-humanrights.org/Documents/Guias%20Colombia))).

## THEME THREE – KEY ISSUES

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Key issues facing companies operating in Colombia including Indigenous rights, land, water, conflict and freedom of association. Although these issues were a recurring theme throughout the roundtable, they were not the sole issues affecting business in Colombia, and many spoke on other issues challenging for business operations in the country e.g. non-discrimination.

## THEME FOUR – DIALOGUE

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The pressing need for a constructive dialogue between corporations and civil society, in particular worker's organisations and trade unions. How do human rights norms and standards apply to those who play the role of holding corporations to account? Do these entities play on a level playing field?

## THEME FIVE - RESOURCES

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The need for greater access to tools and mechanisms for business, particularly the translation and adaption to local needs of existing materials and guidance.





## WELCOME PANEL

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Welcoming comments were given by the event partners together with an outline of their work and interest in the area of business and human rights. **Maria Victoria Llorente, Director, Fundación Ideas para la Paz, John Morrison, Executive Director, Institute for Human Rights and Business, Mark Hodge, Director of the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights** and **Leon Teicher, President, Cerrejón** all spoke of the significance of the event and the positive role business can and is playing in furthering human rights in Colombia.



### Key discussion points

- The debate in Colombia has moved on from being related to corporate philanthropy to new discussions on business accountability. Vice-President Santos outlined the encouraging figures for the percentage of profits earmarked for developing corporate accountability in Colombian companies.
- Need for increased role of civil society.
- Colombia as most advanced nation in integrating the Voluntary Principles.
- Building common state objectives is a priority.
- Critical discussions on retention of competitiveness whilst addressing human rights.
- Increased pressure generated by power of globalisation.
- Need for greater acceptance by new markets.

## KEYNOTE SPEECH

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This session was hosted by Alexandra Guaqueta, Head of Social Standards and International Engagement, Cerrejón. Opening remarks from Mark Hodge, Director of the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights provided the context for the event and the current state of play of business and human rights. The keynote speech was delivered by Francisco Santos, Vice-President of Colombia.



### **Francisco Santos, Vice-President, Colombia**

*“The debate in Colombia has moved on from being related to corporate philanthropy to new discussions on business accountability and there*

*are very encouraging figures released showing the percentage of profits earmarked for developing corporate accountability in Colombian companies. It should also be noted that Colombia is the most advanced nation in the integration of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. ... Civil Society must play a more constructive role in this debate to further human rights in the business field. Building common State objectives is also a priority.”*

*“There are critical discussions to be had about competitiveness whilst upholding human rights which forces the need for a permanent constructive dialogue with all employees, in all sectors and with all stakeholders. There has been increased pressure generated by power of globalisation.”*

*“There should be pressure for greater acceptance of the need to integrate human rights into business practices by new markets to ensure our foreign trade policy can align with our national practices.”*

## GLOBAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

This session focused on the policy context, trends and emerging expectations on business to respect human rights. The aim of the session was to explore the wider context within which business in Colombia is operating today. The session was moderated by **Alexandra Guaqueta, Head of Social Standards and International Engagement, Cerrejón** and included **Gerald Pachoud, Special Advisor to the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General on Business and Human Rights**, **Salil Tripathi, Director of Policy, Institute for Human Rights and Business**, **Bennett Freeman, Senior Vice President, Sustainability Research and Policy, Calvert Investments and Former US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor**, and **Jose Rafael Unda, President's Advisor on Mining, Infrastructure and Oil**.



### Key discussion points

- The panel addressed the following questions: What should governments do? What should companies do? Why is the realisation of human rights critical to business? Colombia as an emerging model for business and human rights solutions; and Colombian Government perspectives on human rights and business.
- Discussed the business case for integrating human rights into business.
- Explored the key human rights issues and human rights flash-points facing businesses globally and in Colombia.
- Reviewed the mandate and findings of the UN SRSG Professor John Ruggie and an introduction to the Protect, Respect, Remedy framework.
- Discussed the need for and benefits of transparency (moving away from “naming and shaming” to “knowing and showing”) and the potential risks faced in conducting due diligence being out weighted by the benefits of compliance, transparency and knowledge of the full spectrum of social-related risks. Explored challenges faced and action by government and business in Colombia. The importance of action on the ground in improving the climate for trade and investment.

**Gerald Pachoud, Special Advisor to the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General on Business and Human Rights**

*"We have to forget about the term "human rights" as it has become very politicised. We should think instead about people moving away from fear. Moving away from want and need is what human rights is all about. Human Rights are not a complex thing - they are about living with dignity and stability. The interest we have in the term human rights is that it is the codification for all people around the world to respect standards – a benchmark for dignity".*

*"The mandate has been trying to get out of the triangle of Geneva, New York, London to encounter experiences, feelings and reactions of people in other areas such as Africa, Latin America and Asia. What we found was a unanimous wish to respect human rights, but what did that mean? We needed to find the right framework and in 2008 the Protect, Respect, Remedy framework was put forward to this end. The framework portrays a shift in responsibility back to governments for human rights, such as provision of education and health, but a universal responsibility for companies to respect (not infringe upon) the rights of others. The third pillar of the framework is access to better remedies - the need for communities to effectively voice, and have remedied, their grievances about company impacts. ... How does a company show that it respects human rights? The answer is to conduct due diligence. John Ruggie speaks of the need to move away from 'naming and shaming' to 'knowing and showing'."*

*"People sometimes question whether human rights is too broad for a business context, but the breadth of human rights allows you to cover all risks. Yahoo! would not have seen privacy as a major issue for example. Human rights allow you to cover the full spectrum of social related risks. It is not too wide. On the contrary, by using the label 'human rights' you can set some boundaries on stakeholder expectation. CSR and philanthropy has no limits to breach - if you adopt a human rights risk management approach you can set clear boundaries. It's a big responsibility, but not an infinite one".*

**Salil Tripathi, Director of Policy, Institute for Human Rights and Business**

*"Bad things do happen - forced labour and eviction, illicit payments, abuse by security forces, violation of sanctions, providing the means to kill, misuse of company assets .... In conflict companies may not always have control. But they cannot escape responsibility. Companies want to use resources and want to have security - but they have to respect rights."*

*"Good things can happen – if we look at Occidental, Cerrejón and others we see examples of how due diligence can be conducted and affect change for the good – the same applies to processes and voluntary initiatives such as the Kimberly Process in the diamond industry and Equator Principles in the finance sector."*

**Bennett Freeman, Senior Vice President, Sustainability Research and Policy, Calvert Investments and Former US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor**

*"It's fair to say few democracies have faced such grave human rights challenges as Colombia over last two decades. Colombia has been a laboratory for the key issues that business has to address with respect to its roles and responsibilities when it comes to human rights ... I think Colombia is emerging not only as an example of serious problems but more positively as a model for innovative solutions. As progress continues to be made and international recognition of that progress grows, relationships with donors can improve along with the climate for trade and investment".*

**Jose Rafael Unda, President's Advisor on Mining, Infrastructure and Oil**

*"In Colombia the business responsibility to respect human rights has a constitutional definition in Article 33 and Article 34 of the Charter where the connection between business and human rights is clear and transparent and to be respected by every company. Democratic security is security for everyone not just for some. ... A key aspect of responsible investment is being aware of the other people. An investment of an extractive company for instance will impact the interest of the citizens. In making investments, companies should be responsible and aware of the negative and positive effects they may have on others".*



## BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS - DOING BUSINESS IN COLOMBIA

This session offered the opportunity to hear about practical responses to concrete, often entrenched, challenges that have been faced by business leaders in Colombia. Speakers discussed specific instances faced at facility or factory level and explained what a human rights approach has added to their response and future plans. This session was moderated by **Luis Fernando De Angulo, TRUST Building Consultants and Member of the Board at the Institute of Human Rights and Business**. The panel included **Leon Teicher, President, Cerrejón**, **Luis Fernando Rico, President, ISAGEN**, **Pablo Largacha, Public Affairs & Communications Latin Center Business Unit, The Coca-Cola Company**, and **Angela Rivas Gamboa, Head of Business and Peace Building, Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP)**.



### Key discussion points

- The panel covered the issues of conflict and human rights grievances; business and human rights issues beyond security; human rights and the workplace; emergent topics in business and human rights in Colombia.
- Cerrejón spoke of the challenges of operating in vulnerable areas; the need for a clearly enforceable compulsory human rights policy; the use of tools such as the VPs and IFC guidelines; the use of grievance mechanisms; ensuring rigorous due diligence throughout operations; and the value of strict agreements with law enforcement. *“We do what we do in this area for a reason – moral obligation”*.
- ISAGEN discussed how human development is focussed on profitability, social development and environmental protection. *“Human Rights are the articulating factor among those three factors of growth. That has led the company to be inspired by two international initiatives: the UN Global Compact and the Millennium Goals”*.
- The Coca-Cola Company stressed the need for fair treatment of all employees as part of the license to operate and brand protection, and the need for increased awareness of what happens along the company's supply chain. The company cited two key cases - Union member assassinations by illegal paramilitary and guerrilla groups in Colombia and child labour in sugar cane harvesting in El Salvador. In order to address situations such as these, the company built on existing policies and procedures to create a Workplace Rights Policy and a Human Rights Statement which are used with every entity where it has a majority share participation, and also strengthened its Supplier Guiding Principles, which apply to all direct and indirect suppliers to the Coca-Cola system.
- FIP's work in this area has identified that key issues are not always being framed as part of human rights and are therefore isolated in departments that cannot exert any influence. Emerging key issues include land (for many this is at the core of the conflict) and extortion (arming illegal groups) and the

extent to which companies can be said to be victims or accomplices. Another trend is the role of corruption of states in preventing the ability to protect human rights.

### **Leon Teicher, President, Cerrejón**

*“It is possible to promote human rights - we as a Colombian company have done that. We have a clear human rights policy which is compulsory. We have tools like the Voluntary Principles (VPs) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Guidelines. In Cerrejón we also use our grievance mechanism, ensure due diligence is conducted with rigour, make agreements with law enforcement agencies and report to NGOs on possible threats people think they are receiving from groups. Transparency has helped us enhance our protection for those that feel their rights have been violated. ... It would be useful to have international certification, and to aim for a level playing field – a set of rules of the game that key players should be committed to. Unions need to have the same rules of the game for all of us to continue to take a big step forward in the implementation of human rights.*”

*“We have to understand that we ourselves have to work to change our general attitude in implementing a self regulation system and control to prevent illegal mining for instance. We do what we do in this area for a particular reason – our moral obligation. ... We have to do some work in educating people, teaching the ‘gospel’, abiding by the law and honouring the law. Another issue behind the questions needs to be laid on the table and that is the assumption that the company is ‘bad’. We have two battles with that – the fight against the notion that all companies violate human rights and that multinationals are automatically associated with a particular style of behaviour. In the dialogue we look for balance. If you are looking for a level playing field then I think those issues have to be addressed.”*

### **Luis Fernando Rico, President, ISAGEN**

*“It is important to establish what we understand by human rights. Business has stakeholders and therefore businesses have to have ethical principles for extending well-being to those other groups impacted by their existence. In ISAGEN, sustainable human development focuses on profitability, social development and environmental protection. Human rights are the articulating factor among those three factors of growth. ... We need to create and strengthen trust with business and civil society. We need to understand the peculiarities of each region here. Comprehensive social political studies are important before any projects are undertaken. ... Many times you run into people who say human rights are leftist or rightist - to begin with that is a problem. Many times in the agreements we handle the question arises “so you agree with those who are accusing us”? We need to make them understand that it’s a two sided coin. This helps allow for visibility so we can face issues. ... There is increasing will in the corporate world to tackle these issues and there is awareness. I think that we have come closer little by little on aspects such as trade associations.”*

### **Pablo Largacha, Public Affairs & Communications Latin Center Business Unit, The Coca-Cola Company**

*“In 2005 the Company developed or improved a set of policies and processes, which today are at the core of the way we do business in every country where we operate ... our Human Rights Statement and Workplace Rights Policy, which are guided by international human rights principles ...[and] our Supplier Guiding Principles, which emphasize to all direct and indirect suppliers to the Coca-Cola system the importance of responsible workplace policies and practices that comply, at a minimum, with applicable local labor laws .... Today, the strategy The Coca-Cola Company employed in Colombia and El Salvador has garnered positive results, and has inspired conversations within its global business system about scaling-up such efforts to include other countries facing similar challenges. Anti-Union violence in Colombia, or child labor in the sugar farms of El Salvador, just to name two workplace issues, are not externalities that businesses like ours can ignore or just leave in the hands of Government. By internalizing these issues, Coca-Cola is now being able to transform relationships – some of which had traditionally been adversarial- into cooperative partnerships.”*

*"No company can tackle these problems acting on its own. In our case, by joining efforts with government authorities, other companies and organizations such as Fundación Ideas para la Paz, the UN Global Compact, the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights, the Institute on Human Rights and Business and the International Labor Organization, we have been able to establish clear priorities, set measurable goals and take decisive action to address these challenges."*

**Angela Rivas Gamboa, Head of Business and Peace Building, Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP)**

*"FIP's work in this area has identified that key issues are not always being framed as part of human rights and are therefore isolated in departments that cannot exert any influence. ... Emerging issues in Colombia for business include land, which for many is the core of the conflict in Colombia. More specifically, internal forced displacement, the volume of abandoned land, and informality in land tenure are relevant here. Companies are now facing the effects of a series of unresolved issues regarding land tenure in the midst of multiple conflicts that so often have resorted to violence. ... Another trend is the role played by corruption in States which prevents the company's ability to protect human rights. Maybe we should highlight the question of how much the private sector can do in promoting practices against corruption.*

*"A third emerging issue relates to corruption and the capture of the State by illegal actors, which are understood as factors that prevent the State to effectively protect human rights and pose significant challenges to companies when seeking to respect human rights and promote human rights respect. ... In addressing these emerging topics, is worth posing the question of how much can business do to address them and deal with them within the business and human rights framework"*

**Luis Fernando De Angulo, member of the board at the Institute of Human Rights and Business**

*"We have faced a left versus right ideological confrontation of human rights, and the establishment has to a great extent given away the human rights cause despite human rights being a founding element of liberal democracies and capitalism. The paradox in Colombia is that human rights are perceived as a leftist banner flag and security is perceived as an interest of the right. It is seldom that the interdependence of both is highlighted. ... Another key issue in the integration of human rights in business is how this agenda is communicated to smaller companies. The interaction of smaller firms with the global agenda is weaker and normally they do not have the resources to track topics like human rights, notwithstanding the impacts and influence of these firms in the more vulnerable sectors of the population. We need to address questions like 'What barriers do we have to remove to be able to pass these messages on to those who don't normally engage with the human rights community?' What needs to be done to assist them in raising awareness and preparation so that in 3 years' time they reach a position of constructive engagement that we all are looking for".*



## PARTNER REFLECTIONS

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A short dialogue offered a chance for participants to share challenges, questions and needs in relation to the integration of human rights into business practice in Colombia, exploring the barriers, ongoing questions and challenges; what business leaders need; what is needed from governments, peers in industry, business networks/associations, civil society, investors, etc. The session was moderated by Kathryn Dovey, Director, Global Business Initiative on Human Rights.



This panel included reflections on the day from **Angela Rivas Gamboa, Head of Business and Peace Building, Fundación Ideas para la Paz**, **Luis Fernando De Angulo, TRUST Building Consultants and member of the board at the Institute of Human Rights and Business** and **Diana Chavez - El Centro Regional para América Latina y el Caribe en apoyo del Pacto Mundial de las Naciones Unidas**.

**Angela Rivas Gamboa, Head of Business and Peace Building, Fundación Ideas para la Paz**

*“One of the things lacking is a diversity of relevant materials in Spanish. For many companies this provides a barrier to integration, coupled with the fact that these materials are adapted to another reality. They don’t correspond to what we see day to day in Colombia”.*

A closing speech was delivered by Carlos Franco, Director of the Vice-President’s Office Programme on Human Rights.

**Carlos Franco, Director of the Vice-President’s Office Programme on Human Rights**

*“There is strong polarisation – Colombian NGOs have the capability to move US Congress and European Parliament. No state has this ability. At the Government level –there is a lack in cohesion between laws and practice. You have to formulate a cohesive policy.”*

*“We have to overcome the idea that human rights is simply a declaration of principles – that it is a declarative issue or a way to put out fires. Those opinions have to be overcome and we must understand that human rights are a question of the culture of the business”*

Carlos Franco outlined seven key issues to address what is at stake for business:

- Polarisation of certain sectors of civil society and the idealisation of human rights in Colombia.
- The challenge of operating in conflict-affected areas and the lack of commitment in the non-extractive sectors to engage in this debate.
- Importance of Indigenous ancestry and Colombia as a signatory of Agreement 169 of the ILO Convention.
- The need for business to overcome the international community’s idea that business is responsible for all social imbalances.
- The need for clearer policy that will favour dialogue with civil society.
- Changing the concept we have of human rights in businesses.

- The overarching need for companies to mitigate what is unavoidable and prevent what is avoidable.

FIP stressed the barriers to integration given the need for translation and adaption to local situations of existing materials and tools.

Moving forward after the event, the following actions were noted:

- **Regional Business Roundtable in 2011:** There will be a business roundtable session for Latin American companies lead by the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights together with the event partners in early 2011. The UN Global Compact Regional Centre will play the lead convening role in this session. Colombian businesses are encouraged to express interest in participating, speaking at the event and/or contributing case studies.
- **Adapting Resources:** The adaptation and translation of Business and Human Rights tools/resources for a Latin American context will be led by the knowledge development arm of Trust Building Consultants, Companies are invited to participate in a working group on this item with the intent to launch revised materials at the GBI Roundtable in 2011.
- **Ongoing Colombian leadership:** Fundación Ideas para la Paz and the Colombian Global Compact Network among others, will continue to provide guidance and thought-leadership in the area of Business and Human Rights. The UNGC Colombia Network already has plans for Business and Human Rights training courses in the second half of 2010.





## CONVENERS



GLOBAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE  
ON HUMAN RIGHTS



The Global Business Initiative On Human Rights (GBI) is a unique business-led initiative focused on advancing human rights in a business context around the world. GBI currently has 14 corporate members from 11 industry sectors with representation from Latin America, Asia, Europe, North America, and the Middle East. Through core group work streams and business outreach activities GBI seeks to build a global community of business leaders sharing good practices, identifying barriers to corporate respect for human rights in diverse contexts and inputting into international policy developments. Our work plan is divided into two parallel tracks. First, Action-Learning around the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; and second, Business Awareness and Capacity Building through events and workshops in emerging and developing markets. GBI works in collaboration with the UN Global Compact Office and is supported by the Swiss Government. For more information visit: [www.global-business-initiative.org](http://www.global-business-initiative.org)



Fundación Ideas Para La Paz (FIP) is a non-profit centre for independent thinking, created in 1999 by a group of Colombian businessmen. Its mission is to contribute with ideas and proposals to overcome the armed conflict in Colombia and building sustainable peace, with support from the business sector. FIP's work is founded on the belief that the Colombian conflict must end with a negotiation or a series of peace negotiations, which will require proper preparation and technical assistance if they are to be successful. Meanwhile, it is clear that the conflict in its politico-military dimension is in the process of transformation. It is therefore essential to understand these new scenarios to deal creatively and effectively with the new challenges that arise. In order to meet these challenges, the Foundation has expanded its agenda and has strengthened its capacity for analysis and management with a strong academic and professional team working on the following four areas:

- Dynamics of conflict and peace negotiations.
- Post-conflict peace building.
- Business and conflict.
- Security and defence studies.

For more information visit: [www.ideaspaz.org](http://www.ideaspaz.org)



Centro Regional de Apoyo para  
América Latina y el Caribe

El Centro Regional para América Latina y el Caribe en apoyo del Pacto Mundial de las Naciones Unidas is an initiative of 10 CEOs and 2 Colombian associations (later joined by a Mexican company and a Canadian company). It is a non-profit organisation that works in association with the Global Compact and its principles as a strategy for economic and social development from a perspective of the conditions and characteristics of the region, and to act in favour of implementing this initiative in Latin America. Its objectives are:

- To be the forum to generate ideas and innovative tools that will strengthen Social Responsibility (SR) in Latin America and the Caribbean in the framework of the Global Compact Principles, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other initiatives promoted by the Global Compact Office.
- Contribute to the consolidation, from the perspective of the Global Compact, a Latin American and Caribbean agenda for competitiveness and project the international context as a strategy for development.
- Contribute to the strengthening of local support networks and support the Global Compact in the professionalization of its focal points.
- Contribute to and facilitate the strengthening of the Global Compact agenda in the region.
- Facilitate and promote joint initiatives aimed at strengthening SR in Latin America and the Caribbean.

For more information visit: [www.centroregionalmal.org](http://www.centroregionalmal.org)



The Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) is dedicated to being a global centre of excellence and expertise on the relationship between business and internationally proclaimed human rights standards.

It provides a trusted, impartial space for dialogue and independent analysis to deepen understanding of human rights challenges and issues and the appropriate role of business. The Institute seeks to address problems where the law may be unclear, where accountability and responsibility may not be well-defined, and where legitimate dispute settlement mechanisms may be non-existent or poorly-administered.

The Institute works to raise corporate standards and strengthen public policy to ensure that the activities of companies do not contribute to human rights abuses, and in fact lead to positive outcomes.

For more information visit: [www.institutehrb.org](http://www.institutehrb.org)

