LEADERS BREAKFAST ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEXT TEN YEARS

A side event of the UN Global Compact Leaders Summit held in the Marriott Marquis
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If we can ensure that there is leadership in the business community; that there is a sense that this matters in every country: in North America, in Europe, in Latin America, in Africa, in China, in India and that we have a common language, that will be so important for the agenda of human rights. It is an agenda that has been far too politicised and in many ways the business community and the mandate of John Ruggie can depoliticise the agenda and make it very clear that there are responsibilities.

Mary Robinson, Chair of the Board, Institute for Human Rights and Business
UNGC Board Member and Chair of the Global Compact Human Rights Working Group

At its heart, [business and human rights] is about a way of thinking, but that way of thinking has to be translated into management systems if it is going to have effect. De-mystifying human rights, making it clear that human rights are about simple things, continues to be a challenge.

Professor John Ruggie, UN Special Representative on Business and Human Rights

The issues that we face as we do business, that have [been] alluded to; issues like child labor, poverty, labor laws, cannot simply be solved alone. Part of our responsibility is to be part of these solutions.

Paul Polman, CEO, Unilever

It is not an “either-or-discussion”: Human rights impact assessments and reporting are just as important as supporting the development agenda. Both are critical. The moral compass must exist. The respect and implementation of business responsibility to respect human rights must be in place before a corporation should think about becoming a partner in development efforts.

“Getting it right” in this context will mean taking a position for human rights and addressing corporate due diligence.

His Excellency Secretary of State Martin Dahinden
Director General Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

We really need to standardize guidelines, and I need to speak the same language with my clients in Guatemala, Panama, Peru, Europe, the United States, Canada, China, India, where my clients are based. I need to speak the same language with our stakeholders, with NGOs, with unions and with governments.

Alexandra Guaqueta, Head of Social Standards and International Engagement, Cerrejón Coal Company
On Thursday 24 June 2010, a group of over 300 individuals from business, government and civil society gathered in New York to attend a breakfast session focused on the human rights responsibilities of companies. The purpose of the breakfast was to highlight the work being done by the Special Representative on Business and Human Rights and also draw attention to the views of business, government and civil society leaders as to where this debate may be in ten year’s time.

Mary Robinson, Chair of the Institute for Human Rights and Business, Board Member of the UN Global Compact and Chair of its Human Rights Working Group, moderated a panel featuring Professor John Ruggie, UN Special Representative on Business and Human Rights, Mr Jamshed Irani, Director of the Board, Tata Sons, Mr Paul Polman, CEO, Unilever Plc., His Excellency Ambassador Mr Herman Schaper, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations, and His Excellency Secretary of State Martin Dahinden, Director General Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The panel discussed the United Nations framework for Business and Human Rights (“Protect, Respect and Remedy”) and how governments and companies can benefit from and support it.

The event was a side session at the UN Global Compact Leaders Summit. The Summit itself marked the ten-year anniversary of the UN Global Compact and provided a helpful platform for raising awareness of recent and likely developments on business and human rights, in particular the corporate responsibility to respect human rights.

The event was hosted by the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI), the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB), and the Global Compact Network Netherlands (GCNL), with support from the Governments of Switzerland and the Netherlands, the Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact Office.
LAUNCH OF KEY RESOURCES

Two new publications on human rights due diligence were formally launched and introduced at the beginning of the meeting:

- ‘The “State of Play” of Human Rights Due Diligence: Anticipating the Next Five Years’ by the Institute for Human Rights and Business. This report presents a snapshot of the current state of understanding and implementation of human rights due diligence based on interviews with a number of multinational companies. The report can be found at www.institutehrb.org

- ‘How to do business with respect for human rights: a guidance tool for companies’ by the Global Compact Network Netherlands. This guidance tool is the result of lessons learnt from a Business and Human Rights Initiative led by the local network working with ten Dutch companies. It aims to help companies consider and implement human rights due diligence. The report can be found in the human rights section at www.unglobalcompact.org

Additionally, the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights launched the first two dialogues in a series of ‘Business Dialogues on Integrating Human Rights into Business:

- Getting started and showing leadership in integrating human rights into business management by Bob Corcoran, Vice President, Corporate Citizenship, General Electric Company and President of the GE Foundation.

- A rights-based approach: clarity, culture change and daily realities by Alexandra Guaqueta, Head of Social Standards and International Engagement, Cerrejón.

These are a series of interviews with business leaders from around the world on the importance of integrating human rights into business practice. The interviews focus on how to perform various aspects of human rights due diligence in practice. They can be found at www.global-business-initiative.org/resources
The Leaders Breakfast was chaired by Mary Robinson and the first presentation was made by Professor John Ruggie, focusing on the UN “Protect, Respect, Remedy” Framework. He drew attention to the corporate responsibility to respect and highlighted the need for this to be translated into the management systems of companies in order for it to take root. Additionally, he noted the need to demystify human rights for a business audience. Reference was made also to the request by the Human Rights Council to the Special Representative to develop guiding principles to “operationalize” the framework, as well as to provide ideas as to the possible next steps.

Paul Polman, CEO of Unilever, noted that there is significant pressure coming from consumers and NGOs for companies to act and that for a company like Unilever operating globally, frameworks are not enough since there are differing standards in certain places with regard to health and safety, worker treatment etc. Additionally, the need for a greater number of companies to create and adopt human rights policies was underlined. Jamshed Irani, Chairman of Tata Sons, recognised the need to look after the community in the areas where they do business.

Bob Corcoran of General Electric commented from the floor that realising rights is about realising potential and therefore essential for a business. Similarly Alexandra Guaqueta noted that understanding the business and human rights developments was essential for her company in Colombia and that it has helped her to speak a common language with clients and with the NGO community.

From the Government perspective, His Excellency Ambassador Mr Herman Schaper (Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations), noted their support for John Ruggie’s framework within the OECD Guidelines in particular. He also highlighted the important role governments can play in promoting consideration for human rights by business through providing support, setting appropriate incentives and disincentives for business, and supporting initiatives such as the work of the Special Representative. His Excellency Secretary of State Martin Dahinden (Director General Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) recognised the need for Government policies on these issues to be better joined up and that corporate respect for human rights should be a precondition. He clearly outlined the importance of realizing human rights in meeting development goals such as the Millennium Development Goals.
DISCUSSION POINTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

- There is important momentum in the business and human rights arena, which should be fully employed to move all parties in the debate further;

- There are few areas of corporate social responsibility that have developed as rapidly as the business and human rights agenda;

- The business and human rights framework of the Special Representative provides a good starting point, now widely accepted and supported;

- The publications launched not only demonstrate that some of its core features are possible in business practice, but that in many ways companies are already employing and integrating them;

- There is a need for alignment between the framework and other key CSR initiatives such as the OECD Guidelines, ISO 26000, and the UN Global Compact;

- There is a positive role which can be played by the Global Compact to achieve these objectives, including the value of the local networks and the role of leadership and best practice in catalysing action.
ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED FOR THE MEETING

AAR
ABB
Accenture
Africa Corporate Governance Advisory Services
Africa Institute for Corporate Citizenship
Africa Leadership Forum
Africa Progress Panel
Air France
Alfadel Group
Al Mansour
Allens Arthur Robinson
Ambir Solutions
Andersson Eiffers Felix
Apetito AG
APG All Pensions Group
APICS - The Assoc for Ops Management
Arab African International Bank
Arcor Group
AREADIS NV
ARGE Consulting
Ashridge
Asocana
Asociacion Nacional de Empresarios de Colombia
Aspen Institute
Aspirations
ATP Denmark
Audencia Nantes School of Management
AXA Group
Babson College
Bank of America
Barcelona Centre for the support of the UNGC
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Benedictine University
BHRRC
Board of Directors of the UNGC Foundation
Boston College
BPW International
Bradesco Bank, Brazil
Braskem
BSR
CABO VERDE TELECOM (CVTELECOM), Cape Verde Is.
Café de Eleta
Calvert
Camargo Correa Cimentos
Cape Town International Convention Centre
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Center for International Private Enterprise
Center on Global Counter Terrorism Cooperation
Central Warehousing Corporation
Centro Regional Para America Latina y el Caribe, Colombia
Cerrejón Coal Company
Chevron
CIBJO
City and County of San Francisco
CIWI GmBH
Clifford Chance LLP
Coca-Cola Company (The)

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ITESM
Jordan Aviation Group
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Kennedy School of Government, Harvard
Kenya Grange
KPMG International
La Trobe University
Latnam Watkins LLP
Lazare Kaplan International
L’Oreal France
M.N. Services N.V.
Maala - Business for Social Rep in Israel
Maersk
Maio & Co
Maplecroft
Martina Tuaar Group
McBride Corporation
Middlesex University Business School
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway
Mission Essential Personnel
Mitsui & Co.
Mondo Fragilis
Monsanto Co.
Mrs Helena Kaushik’s Women’s College
National Bank of Serbia
NBI South Africa
Neiman International Pharmaceuticals plc
Nestle
Networking Action
Nexen Inc
Nomitek Mexico
Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development
NZ Superannuation Fund
OHCHR
OneStep Viet Co.
Oxfam America
Patninija Amarasinghe
PensionDanmark
Perm Mission of Algeria to the UN
Perm Mission of Bangladesh to the UN
Perm Mission of Belgium to the UN
Perm Mission of Chile to the UN
Perm Mission of Denmark to the UN
Perm Mission of Egypt to the UN
Perm Mission of Lebanon to the UN
Perm Mission of Moldova to the UN
Perm Mission of Morocco to the UN
Perm Mission of Nepal to the UN
Perm Mission of New Zealand to the UN
Perm Mission of Norway to the UN
Perm Mission of Romania to the UN
Perm Mission of Sri Lanka to the UN
Perm Mission of Switzerland to the UN
Perm Mission of the State of Qatar
Perm Mission of the Ukraine to the UN
Perm Observer Mission of the Holy Sea to the UN
PGGM Investments