



United Nations Global Compact



**Mandate of the Special Representative
on the Issue of Human Rights and
Transnational Corporations and other
Business Enterprises**

The UN Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework for Business and Human rights:

Relationship to UN Global Compact Commitments

May 2010

In 2008, the United Nations Human Rights Council endorsed a policy Framework for business and human rights, which was proposed by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Issue of Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises, Professor John Ruggie.

The UN Framework is organized around the three foundational principles of “protect, respect and remedy”: the state duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties, including business; the corporate responsibility to respect human rights; and the need for more effective access to remedies.

The corporate responsibility to respect human rights means to avoid infringing on the rights of others and to address adverse impacts that may occur. Its scope includes the adverse impacts generated through a company’s own business activities as well as through its relationships with other parties, such as business partners, entities in its value chain, other non-State actors and State agents. The appropriate corporate response to avoiding the risks of infringing on others’ rights is to exercise human rights due diligence. The tools and processes companies employ will vary with circumstances, including company size and sector of operations. But generally it will include adopting a statement of company intent; assessing actual and potential impacts; integrating these into a company’s internal oversight and control systems; and tracking and reporting performance. Grievance mechanisms for remediation may be provided directly by the company, through collaborative arrangements with other companies or organizations, or by facilitating recourse to a mutually accepted external expert or body.

While companies may take on additional responsibilities voluntarily, and operational conditions may dictate them in specific circumstances, the corporate responsibility to respect human rights is the baseline responsibility of all companies in all situations. It exists independently of States’ duties or capacity.

These and other management actions business can take to respect and support human rights are reflected in the poster available in all six official languages on the Global Compact website: [English](#), [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [French](#), [Russian](#) and [Spanish](#)

Other guidance materials that can help with implementation of the responsibility to respect (and the voluntary commitment to support) human rights can be found at:

http://www.unglobalcompact.org/Issues/human_rights/Tools_and_Guidance_Materials.html

In this regard, the UN Protect, Respect and Remedy framework provides further operational clarity for the two human rights principles championed by the Global Compact. Principle 1 calls upon companies to **respect** and support the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and Principle 2 calls upon them to ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Many participants in the Global Compact desire to support the promotion of human rights, and to make a positive contribution to the realization of human rights where they are in a position to do so. But efforts to promote and contribute to the fulfilment of human rights through such efforts do not substitute for the failure to respect rights.

Given the presence in Principle 1 of the responsibility to respect human rights, the framework reinforces the UN Global Compact, which advocates that companies put in place robust policies and procedures on all Global Compact principles and communicate on an annual basis with their own stakeholders about their progress.