

Global Compact Leaders Summit 2007

**Working Breakfast of the
UN Global Compact Human Rights Working Group (HRWG)
Vieux-Bois Restaurant, Geneva, 6 July, 7:30-8:30 am**
Sponsored by the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs



SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the meeting

The presence of a significant number of the HRWG participants at the recent Global Compact Leaders Summit provided an opportunity for the group to meet face to face for the first time. The HRWG was formed earlier this year and is chaired by Global Compact Board Member Mary Robinson (former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, currently founder and President of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative). Participants were asked to engage in a preliminary brainstorming on ideas for the Global Compact's human rights work programme for the coming year.

Participants

42 participants (see attached list), comprised of members of the HRWG, other colleagues from their organizations and observers attended the meeting.

Welcome and introductions

Mary Robinson opened the meeting, thanking the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs for sponsoring the breakfast. She welcomed the level of interest in the HRWG and high level of expertise of its members but noted that human rights remain a relatively new area for most businesses and one that continues to generate a certain degree of trepidation on the part of some business leaders. She welcomed the ongoing development of new business and human rights tools and emphasized the need for these tools to be further tested and more widely disseminated and used. She also mentioned the potential of the Global Compact Local Networks as a way to reach and engage a wide number of Global Compact participants in human rights.

Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, was invited to address the meeting. She emphasized the need for concrete actions to help move the business and human rights agenda forward, and encouraged businesses to look at how they could not only respect human rights, but also how they could promote them.

Human Rights-related Activities and Publications being launched at the Summit

Overview

In addition to this breakfast meeting, human rights activities at the Summit included a human rights roundtable session intended to elicit inputs for the Global Compact's work programme; the launch of the new OHCHR/UNGC human rights and business e-learning tool; a one-page human rights framework that was the product of collaboration between the BLIHR, IBLF, UNGC and OHCHR and which will be available in all UN languages; the IBLF/IFC/UNGC Guide to Human Rights Impact Assessment; and a flyer about the upcoming publication of the second volume of the UNGC/OHCHR case studies-based publication

Embedding Human Rights in Business Practices. A Chinese version of the BLIHR/UNGC/OHCHR publication Integrating Human Rights into Business Management was also introduced at the Summit.

OHCHR/UNGC/UN Staff College Human Rights Training Package

This new OHCHR/UNGC web-based learning tool is for Global Compact participants and other businesses. It is an entry level interactive learning course on human rights and business. Its objectives are to help managers and CSR professionals in companies participating in the UN Global Compact to understand what human rights are and how they are relevant to their business operations. The tool focuses on the two Global Compact human rights principles and related concepts of spheres of influence and complicity. The tool is available on both the UNGC and OHCHR websites. Feedback on the tool is welcome for inclusion in future revisions and should be sent to Lene Wendland at OHCHR lwendland@ohchr.org. Links: http://www.ohchr.org/english/HR_Learning.htm; http://www.unglobalcompact.org/Issues/human_rights/index.html

IBLF/IFC/UNGC Guide to Human Rights impact Assessment and Management

This publication, released in “road testing” format, offers eight steps for how to manage and conduct an effective human rights impact assessment. The steps are based on wide-ranging consultations with companies, organisations and individuals with experience in the field. The publication will now be subjected to a period of ‘road testing’ in real-life business projects. Hardcopies are available from the Global Compact Office and IBLF and will shortly be available for download online at http://www.unglobalcompact.org/Issues/human_rights/index.html. Feedback on the Guide is welcome and should be sent to Caroline Ersmarker at the IBLF: caroline.ersmarker@iblf.org

Aims and Membership of the HRWG

The background of the HRWG was explained. Its establishment is part of Mary Robinson’s contribution, as Global Compact Board Member, to the Global Compact. Staff members of Realizing Rights will support Mary Robinson and the Global Compact Office in the activities of the working group. The HRWG has the opportunity to raise the profile of human rights within the Global Compact and among Global Compact participants and stakeholders and to advance the business and human rights agenda around the world within the framework of the Global Compact. Attention was called to the draft TOR for the HRWG, which was circulated at the meeting.

The idea of engaging with government, and some other relevant specialized UN agencies in the HRWG in some way was suggested, even if through focal points or liaison persons. The idea of involving entities that represent business and government in the context of security regulation was also mentioned as a way to achieve a ripple effect. It was also suggested that other human rights organizations be invited. The need for more business participants was also referred to.

Action point:

- Written comments on the draft TOR are invited by 15 August 2007. Please send them to Ursula Wynhoven at the UNGCO: wynhoven@un.org.

Ideas for the Global Compact’s Human Rights Work Programme and 60th anniversary of the UDHR

The meeting participants were invited to share their preliminary ideas on how to take advantage of the

opportunity presented by the upcoming 60th anniversary year of the 1948 signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to enhance respect for human rights and raise the profile of the business and human rights agenda.

Discussion

The following ideas were raised by the meeting participants:

Businesses' approach to human rights

It was suggested that there is a need for further clarity on what is expected of business on human rights and for a neutral space in which the clarification could occur. It was noted that important progress has been made, but that many businesses remain fearful of human rights. At the same time, many NGOs are also fearful of working with business. However, there are many good examples of constructive business and NGO relationships, including on projects to promote development and human rights. It is important that neither business nor NGOs be typecast.

Davos, World Economic Forum

It was suggested that the World Economic Forum should have a plenary session on business and human rights.

Action point:

- The corporate members of the HRWG are encouraged to write to Klaus Schwab of the WEF to encourage them to include business and human rights in the plenary agenda.

Emerging markets

Emerging markets were identified by several of the meeting participants as an important priority.

Tools

It was observed that human rights and business tools are not as effective as they could be in developing countries and emerging markets. Hopes that use of the tools would trickle down the supply chain have not been realized. There is therefore a need to tailor the tools. The need to test and improve existing tools rather than develop new tools too quickly was also raised. Some of the participants volunteered that they are helping to test and thus improve new and existing tools.

Action point:

- Margaret Jungk, Danish Institute for Human Rights, agreed to act as a virtual convenor to coordinate work on human rights indicators for companies.

Human rights policies

It was noted that only around 120 companies have taken the step of introducing dedicated human rights policies; of these, only 60 explicitly refer to the UDHR. The majority of the Global Fortune 500 do not make public reference to human rights in their corporate social responsibility policies. This presents an

opportunity to encourage Global Compact participants to introduce human rights policies, as well as to offer guidance on how to prepare a human rights policy.

Reporting

The importance of human rights indicators for reporting on human rights performance was raised. It was noted that the GRI has human rights related indicators and the issue of whether these are the right ones was posed.

SRSB

Participants noted that the work of John Ruggie as Special Representative of the Secretary General on Business and Human Rights was of particular importance and relevance to the Global Compact. It was agreed that efforts should be made to consult with John Ruggie to explore how the Working Group could be of assistance to his work and how his findings to date as appropriate could help shape future Global Compact activities relating to human rights.

Global Compact Local Networks

There was discussion of the opportunity that Global Compact Local Networks offer in advancing the human rights agenda. Local Networks could offer advice and assistance to their participants on human rights (push) and companies could encourage their local affiliates to engage in Local Networks (pull). It was observed that local affiliates are sometimes less fearful of human rights than their headquarters counterparts. It was suggested that the upcoming Annual Local Networks Forum, 17-18 October in Monterrey, Mexico, could be an opportunity to engage Local Networks in a collective way on human rights. It was noted that the subsidiaries and other affiliates of many Global Compact participants may not be aware of the existence of a Global Compact Local Network in their country.

Action points:

- The Global Compact Office will share information about which Global Compact Local Networks there are and how to contact them. The following link is to a web page where Local Networks and their focal points' contact information can be found: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/NetworksAroundTheWorld/index.html>
- Businesses participating in the HRWG could encourage their local affiliates to engage in Global Compact Local Networks.

Supply chain

Interest was expressed in doing more on human rights, and possibly also labour rights, in the supply chain.

Learning activities, including regional and sectoral approaches

Reference was made to Global Compact learning events and the value of multi-stakeholder dialogue, as well as dialogue among peers. It was suggested that the HRWG could play a role in such events. The value of sectoral and regional approaches to human rights was emphasized. A successful human rights workshop that the Global Compact hosted for the oil and gas sector in Latin America and the Caribbean and which piggybacked on an event for the industry in the region was mentioned as a possible model worthy of replication. It was noted that sectoral approaches are important in enhancing the relevance for business.

Consultation on business and human rights needs and gaps

Attention was drawn to a consultation held the previous week in London. The consultation proposed priorities for the field of business & human rights, as well as suggested a possible way forward. Chris Marsden circulated a note summarising the results of the London consultation, and referred to discussions about the possible establishment of an Institute for Business and Human Rights. Consultations in other regions are planned in the coming months to consider this proposal further.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Working Group will take place in New York on 14 September 2007. It will be a full day meeting. For those that cannot make it in person, an effort will be made to explore options for video conferencing. The idea of piggybacking the meeting onto another event in September or October was explored, but did not work due to scheduling difficulties. A draft agenda for the meeting for comments will be circulated in the coming weeks.

HRWG Breakfast Meeting, 6 July 2007, Geneva, Participant List

Participant	Organization
Mary Robinson (Chair) *#	Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative
Lucy Amis #	IBLF
Louise Arbour ⊕	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Christopher Avery #	Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
Kathrin Bauer ⊕	UN Global Compact Office
Benjamin Beth #	SUEZ
Peter Brew ⊕	IBLF
Fernando Castanon	MONUC
Laurent Corbier #	Areva
Laure-Anne Courdesse ⊕	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Aron Cramer #	Business for Social Responsibility
David Croft #	Cadbury Schweppes
Kathryn Dovey #	Business Leaders Initiative on Human Rights
Brian Fall #	Rio Tinto
Kim Fraser ⊕	Sasol
Jeremy Hobbs #	Oxfam International
Scott Jerbi #	Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative
David G. Johnson	Johnson-Roessler Company
Suzanne Nora Johnson *#	Goldman Sachs
Kellie Johnston ⊕	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Margaret Jungk #	Danish Centre for Human Rights
Morten Kjaerum ⊕	Danish Centre for Human Rights
Klaus Leisinger #	Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development
Vidar Lindefjeld #	Global Compact Nordic Network
Helen Macdonald #	Newmont
Olajobi Makinwa #	UN Global Compact Office
Chris Marsden #	Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
Sir Mark Moody-Stuart *#	Anglo American
John Morrison #	Business Leaders Initiative on Human Rights
Faris Natour ⊕	Business for Social Responsibility
Mads Ovlisen *#	Lego
Gerald Pachoud	Special Adviser to the SRSG
Antonio Peñalosa *#	International Organization of Employers
Ron Popper #	ABB
Ed Potter ⊕	The Coca Cola Company
Marc Probst	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland
Soraya Ramoul #	Novo Nordisk A/S
Marika McCauley Sine #	The Coca Cola Company
Salil Tripathi #	International Alert
Esther Trujillo #	Telefonica S.A.
Lene Wendland #	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Ursula Wynhoven #	UN Global Compact Office

* Global Compact Board Member

Member of the Human Rights Working Group

⊕ From the same organization as a Member of the Human Rights Working Group