



Parallel session: 17 November, 15:00-16:20 (Room XX)

National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights: Challenges and lessons learned

Organized by the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights

Focus of the session

This session will focus on discussing the challenges and lessons learned in developing National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights. It will offer an opportunity to foster dialogue among different stakeholders on the development of national action plans and will showcase examples of good practice. It is held in the context of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights' efforts to promote scaled up action on developing national action plans on business and human rights.

Background

In its resolution 26/22 in June 2014, the UN Human Rights Council called on all States to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and develop national action plans. So far, 9 governments have published NAPs, and NAPs processes are underway in over 20 other countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe. Civil society organizations (CSOs), indigenous peoples, national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and business have been involved in calling for, and supporting, the development of NAPs in their respective countries. Another positive development in 2015 was the support expressed by G7 leaders for the development of effective national action plans to implement the UN Guiding Principles.

The Working Group sent a survey to States on 10 June 2015 which focused on the implementation of the UNGPs and the role of States as economic actors and included questions on NAPs. States were asked to indicate whether they had a plan to develop or update a NAP (or another Government-led plan to promote responsible business practice), and whether such plan refers to the UNGPs and the guidance developed by the Working Group. States were also asked: which Government department(s) were taking the lead and involved in developing such plan and coordinating its implementation; whether different stakeholders, including business associations and civil society organizations, have been involved in developing the NAP; and whether there is an institutional platform for such engagement and participation. Responses received from States during September 2015 will inform the discussion.

Aims and objectives

- Support the UN Working Group's efforts to promote NAPs as a key method for implementing the Guiding Principles
- Highlight the relevance of the development of national action plans for States and other stakeholders
- Understand obstacles to effective NAPs processes and discuss how to overcome challenges
- Present and discuss examples of good practice in this area
- This session will adopt a multi-stakeholder approach in order to assess experiences of NAPs to date, and examine the lessons learned by States and other stakeholders when starting and undertaking a NAP.

Key discussion questions

- What has been the experience of States when undertaking NAPs processes? What have been the specific challenges and lessons learned?
- Are there different challenges and different lessons learned in relation to NAPs conducted by States located in the Global North and the Global South?
- Is the guidance produced by the Working Group on NAPs helpful and are States and other stakeholders using it when undertaking NAPs processes?
- What examples of good practice exist?

Panel

Introductory remarks:

Mr. Michael K. Addo, Member of the Working Group on Business and Human Rights

Moderators:

Ms. Linda Kromjong, Secretary-General, International Organisation of Employers

Mr. Amol Mehra, Director, International Corporate Accountability Roundtable

Speakers:

1. Ms. Sarah Fox, Special Representative for International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of State
2. Mr. Christoph Straesser, Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid at the Federal Foreign Office, Germany
3. Ms. Diana Mendieta Durán, Presidential Adviser on Human Rights, Government of Colombia
4. Mr. Lee Sung-ho, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission of Korea
5. Mr. Paulo Vannuchi, Commissioner, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
6. Mr. Pedro Ortun, Principal Advisor on Corporate Social Responsibility, DG GROW, European Commission

Format

Mr. Michael Addo will give introductory remarks concerning the state of play in relation to National Action Plans, and a review of the Working Group's National Action Plans-related activities over the past year, with a special focus on the updated version of the Working Group's Guidance on National Action Plans.

Ms. Linda Kromjong and Mr. Amol Mehra will then give initial remarks and moderate a discussion with the six panellists, and the audience.

Background reading

Working Group's guidance on National Action Plans launched on 1 December 2014:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Pages/NationalActionPlans.aspx>

Responses received to the Working Group's 2015 survey:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Pages/ImplementationGP.aspx>