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Comments on the *Draft General Comment on State Obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the Context of Business Activities*

UN Global Compact Network Brazil

This contribution has been prepared by the Human Rights and Labor Thematic Group of the Global Compact Network Brazil¹.

The Human Rights and Labor Thematic Group of the Global Compact Network Brazil is dedicated to the social aspect of sustainability, the group has been discussing the role of corporations in the respect to human rights in their activities, in the supply chain and in the communities where they operate. The agenda includes issues related to gender equality, immigrants and refugees, rights of LGBT people, indigenous people and persons with disabilities, fight against racism and forced labor, and promoting the Ruggie Framework, which guides the application of human rights to the corporate environment. The members of the working group are representatives from companies, UN agencies, NGOs and government.

The Global Compact Network Brazil endorses the general comment on “State Obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the Context of Business Activities” and affirms that this document is in line with the principles promoted by our organization to the signatories.

Specific comments

- On Paragraph 9, concerning Non-discrimination, “Among the categories who are often disproportionately affected by the adverse impact of business activities are women and girls, indigenous peoples particularly in relation to extractive projects, and ethnic or religious minorities where they are politically disempowered”: we would like to propose the addition of other vulnerable groups that are disproportionately affected by the adverse impact of business activities: children (boys and girls), surrounding communities and traditional communities (not only indigenous peoples), people with disabilities, migrants and refugees, LGBTI² people and people of African descent.

¹Launched in 2000, the United Nations Global Compact is the major initiative of voluntary corporate sustainability in the world. It assembles more than 13 thousand signatories – comprising small, medium and large companies and organizations – in almost 170 countries, with the objective of aligning business operations with ten principles comprising the areas of human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption. With more than 700 signatories, the UN Global Compact Network Brazil was created in 2003 and it has been hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 2011. It is the fourth largest network in the world, promoting collaborative actions led by the private sector by means of partnerships with other sectors such as the civil society, governments, and UN agencies.

² Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People.



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- On Paragraph 11, “. States Parties should also take appropriate steps, including through temporary special measures, to improve women’s representation in the labour market, including at the upper echelons of the business hierarchy”, the recommendation concerning special measures are restricted to the inclusion and representation of women in the labor market. We would like to propose the addition of other vulnerable groups that are not well represented in the labor market and also suffer from discrimination: people with disabilities, migrants and refugees, LGBTI³ people and people of African descent.

The UN Global Compact Network Brazil thanks the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for the opportunity to provide input to the Draft General Comment and looks forward to cooperating further on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

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Executive Secretary
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³ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People.