

20 November 2014

3rd UN Forum on Business and Human Rights

Side event 3 December 2014, 11:30 – 13:00

“The treaty process: what implication for business?”

The adoption of the Ecuador/South Africa-sponsored resolution in the Human Rights Council on 26 June 2014 resulted in the establishment of an intergovernmental working group (IGW) to draft a binding treaty on business and human rights. The resolution and the vote itself have elicited a lively response from all groups and actors, and have brought the issue of business and human rights further into the limelight.

Many companies, as well as other stakeholders, are deeply interested in the organisation, structure and *modus operandi* of the work of the intergovernmental working group. They have questions with regard to the scope and the possible content of a treaty. Moreover, many businesses and stakeholders are concerned about the potentially negative impact of the treaty-making process on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the promotion of the business and human rights agenda more generally.

This panel

- will give an overview of the organisational issues around the treaty-making process by the OHCHR Officer responsible, Ms Lene Wendland;
- will elaborate on the question of the impact the treaty-making process might have on the wider dissemination and implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;
- will discuss how companies might react to the treaty process.

Panellists are

- Luis Espinosa Salas (Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the UN), tbc
- Mark Hodge (Executive Director, Global Business Initiative on Human Rights),
- Lene Wendland (Adviser on Business and Human Rights in the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights)
- Brent Wilton (Secretary-General, International Organisation of Employers)