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Summary Note

DCAF-ICRC Side-event at the Third Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights,
Geneva, 3 December 2014

Title: 'Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments'

Location/Time: Room XXI at 9:45

Panellists:

- Mr. Claude Voillat, Economic Advisor, Division for Multilateral Organisations, Policy and Humanitarian Action, ICRC (moderator)
- Mr. Alan Bryden, Assistant Director and Head of the Public-Private Partnerships Division, DCAF (co-moderator)
- Mrs. Anne-Marie Buzatu, Deputy Head of the Public-Private Partnerships Division, DCAF
- Mr. Rémy Friedmann, Senior Advisor, Desk Human Security and Business, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Jan Klawitter, Group Manager Government Relations, Anglo American plc.
- Mr. Julio Martínez, Social Innovation Director, Socios Perú

Main points relayed by the presenters:

Mr. Claude Voillat introduced the DCAF-ICRC joint project 'Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments' and raises two main points by way of introduction. Firstly, he highlighted the challenges companies may face working with host governments. In particular he stated that companies may find it difficult to raise security and human rights related concerns with host government stakeholders and at the same time maintain a good relationship with the host state. Secondly, he introduced the continuous challenge of a stable and productive company-community relationship and highlighted the need for better operational guidance.

Mr. Alan Bryden highlighted the particular value and importance of public-private partnerships when addressing security and human rights challenges in complex environments. He emphasised that all stakeholders – companies, governments and civil society - need to show political will and work together. Companies that seek solutions to human rights challenges must therefore, at any level, include outreach and coordination with other local, national and international actors.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Buzatu introduced the two products of the DCAF-ICRC joint project 'Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments': the **Knowledge Hub** and a **Toolkit** of good practices. She highlights how different actors can use and benefit from the products, which can be freely accessed at:

- <http://www.securityhumanrightshub.org/> (Knowledge Hub)

- <http://www.securityhumanrightshub.org/content/toolkit> (Toolkit).

The Knowledge Hub is a web platform that brings together guidance documents, tools and case studies that address security and human rights related issues in an easily accessible and organised way. The Toolkit is a guidance document which addresses real-life security and human rights challenges identified through engagement with many stakeholders.

Mr. Rémy Friedmann highlighted that companies must go beyond the idea to simply “respect” human rights. They must actively search for partnerships with, for instance, local civil society organisations to be able to address security and human rights related concerns. This engagement with local stakeholders must be done early, because negative legacies from the past are not easily undone. Furthermore he stated that the reluctance of host-governments to join multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSI) is often based on the perception that MSIs only work to the image benefit of international companies. Stakeholders must highlight and raise the importance of civil society organisations (CSOs) in MSIs to further engage host-governments.

Mr. Jan Klawitter noted the importance of knowing where the particular issue is located/who the human rights person in the government apparatus actually is (at the local or national level). Silos always exist within companies and governments and the right approach must be adopted to ensure that concerns and challenges are adequately addressed. The engagement with other local partners and stakeholders can strengthen one’s case with government actors. He further highlighted the importance of grievance mechanisms for local communities and managing their expectations through honesty and transparency.

Mr. Julio Martínez explained that from a CSO perspective it is important to explain to government officials their own role in the MSIs and illustrate the case for them. In line with Mr. Friedmann’s comment, his experience highlights the facilitator role CSOs can play between companies and governments. He further raised the importance of transparency and continuous meetings with community representatives.

Key issues of discussion (raised by the audience)

- Perception that companies are sometimes hand in glove with the government when violating human rights.
 - In this regard the discussion highlighted the importance to address security and human rights issues at multiple levels of government (local and national) and with multiple government actors. To avoid negative perceptions, transparency is required with community and CSO stakeholders and to inform them about the company’s policies/interests. There was further

reference to the project's Toolkit, which addresses this issue under its 1.2 'Governance and transparency' Challenges.

- Who is the Toolkit for? How can different actors, such as host governments, profit from it?
 - In line with earlier comments about the importance of a public-private partnership approach, the panel highlighted that the Toolkit, while primarily aimed at companies, may be useful for host and home governments to identify good practices and relationships that can help ensure their duty to 'protect' human rights.
- Does the Toolkit help to address gender specific challenges?
 - The discussion acknowledged the importance of gender issues in complex environments and Alan Bryden highlighted that the next version of the Toolkit (2nd quarter 2015) will be gender mainstreamed.