Consultation on the “Gender Lens to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights”

Conference Centre Varembé, Geneva, Switzerland
31 January – 1 February 2019

1 The UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights (WG) is currently developing guidance on applying a gender lens to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). The guidance will form part of the WG’s June 2019 report to the Human Rights Council.
DAY 1: THURSDAY — 31 — JANUARY

9:15 – 9:30  Welcome Coffee / Registration

Venue: Conference Centre Varembé (CCV), Rue de Varembé 13

9:30 – 10:00  Opening Remarks

- Barbara Fontana, Head of Human Rights Section, Swiss Mission
- Felix Kirchmeier, Manager of Policy Studies, Geneva Academy

10:00 – 11:00  Introduction to the project so far and format of the WG’s 2019 report to the Human Rights Council: Rationale, methodology, scope and structure of the guidance

- Surya Deva, Chairperson, UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights

11:00 – 11:30  Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00  Women, business and human rights: Identifying key challenges and developing a gender-sensitive and gender-responsive framework

Moderation: Harpreet Kaur

- Kick off remarks: Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky, UN Independent Expert on the effect of foreign debt

13:00 – 14:00  Lunch Break

14:00 – 16:00  Discussion regarding guidance on Pillar I: Recommendations to states based on challenges and best practices

Moderation: Surya Deva

- Discriminatory laws, policies, norms and practices
- Gender equality and women's empowerment policies (SDG 5)
- Role of state-owned enterprises and state agencies
- Privatization of public services and public private partnerships
- Public procurement
- Women’s rights in conflict-affected areas
- Vertical and horizontal policy coherence: data collection, monitoring and coordination
- Gender-sensitive/responsive trade and investment policies and institutions

16:00 – 16:30  Coffee Break
16:30 – 17:30  Presentation of Geneva Academy Paper: *Gender Responsive Due Diligence for Business Actors: Human Rights-Based Approaches*

- Joanna Bourke Martignoni and Elisabeth Umlaz

19:00 – 21:30  Dinner - Restaurant Hotel Warwick, Rue de Lausanne 14, Geneva

**DAY 2: FRIDAY – 1 – FEBRUARY**

8:45 – 9:00  Welcome Coffee

9:00 – 11:00  Discussion regarding guidance on Pillar II: Recommendations to businesses based on challenges and best practices

**Moderation:** Surya Deva

- Dealing with diversity in size, sector, operational context, ownership and structure of business enterprises
- Integrating gender in corporate policy commitments
- Gender-sensitive/responsive human rights due diligence
- Gender-sensitive/responsive remediation
- Responding to discriminatory laws, policies, norms and practices
- Dealing with gender equality issues in conflict-affected areas
- Prioritization of preventing and mitigating adverse impacts
- Engagement with gender equality initiatives (e.g., SDG 5, Women Empowerment Principles, OECD Due Diligence Guidance, ILO standards, voluntary codes, and responsible investment frameworks)

11:00 – 11:30  Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:30  Discussion regarding guidance on Pillar III: Recommendations to states and businesses based on challenges and best practices

**Moderation:** Surya Deva

- Women and access to effective remedies
- Overcoming additional barriers faced by women
- Gender-sensitive/responsive adjudication of disputes by courts
- Gender-sensitive/responsive handling of complaints by non-judicial mechanisms
- Establishing gender-sensitive/responsive operational-level grievance mechanisms
- Protecting women human rights defenders
13:30 – 14:30  Lunch Break

14:30 – 15:30  Consolidation of discussion and steps ahead
   Moderation: Felix Kirchmeier

15:30 – 16:00  Closing of the Conference

END OF CONFERENCE