



Forum on Business and Human Rights

Human Rights and Economic and Social Issues Section
Research and Right to Development Division (RRDD)
United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
E-mail: forumbhr@ochchr.org

Reference: RRDD/DESIB/HRESI/CM/JS/LW/is

Date: April 12, 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

Sustainalytics has taken note of the request for input from the OHCHR and the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises for the 2013 Forum on Business and Human Rights. We would like to thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the agenda.

Sustainalytics is a leading global provider of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) research and analysis, with over 20 years of experience in Responsible Investment and Socially Responsible Investment. In addition to extensive ESG research into a universe of more than 4000 companies, we screen approximately 9000 companies on their compliance with the UN Global Compact on a quarterly basis. Sustainalytics assists some of the world's largest asset owners, asset managers, and organizations in integrating ESG considerations into their investment decisions. Implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights is an area of priority for many of our clients, several of whom have adopted positions on, or raised concerns about, the issue of human trafficking.

Human trafficking is an important, but still little understood, issue that continues to pose significant challenges in implementing the corporate responsibility to respect human rights. It is strongly linked to modern forms of slavery, including involuntary servitude, debt bondage, and forced labour, and presents severe human rights risks for companies in many different sectors, from tourism and travel to recruitment agencies, as well as in supply chains – particularly in the garment, technology, and agricultural sectors.

In the context of the 2013 UN Forum, Sustainalytics would like to bring this conversation forward and engage our stakeholders on this important issue. For this reason, we would like to propose a panel on human trafficking in collaboration with Verité, a US-based NGO with a mission of ensuring that people work under safe, fair and legal conditions. Verité is a member of the Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking, and a founding member of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition. It has extensive experience in the area of human trafficking, and has worked with major stakeholders and large corporations in eradicating forced labour and slavery in supply chains around the world.

This panel aims to raise awareness on the issue, scale and scope of human trafficking, to introduce companies to a multi-stakeholder initiatives and best practices at combating and eradicating human trafficking, and to highlight some of the main challenges that companies are facing in this regard.

Proposed Panel: Human Trafficking: Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing the Corporate Responsibility to Respect

Moderator: Sustainalytics

1. Human Trafficking: Scope/Challenges – *Verité*
2. Strategic Initiatives to Prevent Human Trafficking – *Global Business Coalition Against Human Trafficking*
3. Preventing Human Trafficking: Good Practice – the ILO/Un.GIFT Guide “Human Trafficking and Business: Good practices to prevent and combat human trafficking” (*ILO, TBC*)
4. Corporate Example 1: Preventing Human Trafficking (*TBD*)
5. Corporate Example 2: Preventing Human Trafficking (*TBD*)
6. Corporate Example 3: Preventing Human Trafficking (*TBD*)

Both Sustainalytics and Verité are well positioned to introduce the issue of human trafficking, and to present examples of the ways in which it affects corporations in different sectors. In addition, we would like to introduce the Global Business Coalition Against Human Trafficking (gBCAT), a global coalition of some of the world’s largest corporations committed to eradicating trafficking, including sex trafficking and forced labour, from their supply chains, through collaborative initiatives including training modules, awareness raising, sharing best practices and informing public policy.

The corporate speakers in this panel are still to be determined, but we have contacts with a range of companies that have taken significant steps to address the issue of human trafficking from different angles. In the event that this panel proposal is accepted, we would confirm the names of participating corporate speakers as soon as possible.

Sincerely Yours,



Simon MacMahon,

Global Director, Advisory Services
Sustainalytics