

The Role of Research and Scholarship in Promoting Business Respect for Human Rights

Launch of the *Business and Human Rights Journal (BHRJ)*
at the 4th Annual UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva
at 6:30pm on 16 November 2015

Background

The business and human rights (BHR) field – which challenges many traditional paradigms about the relationship of the state and business enterprises with human rights – is full of complex and contentious issues. Resolving these issues requires scholars to conduct research as well as interact with practitioners, government officials, corporate executives, and civil society groups.

The *Business and Human Rights Journal (BHRJ)*, published by Cambridge University Press, aims to provide an authoritative platform to publish cutting-edge BHR research and share it with diverse stakeholders. In addition to publishing scholarly articles, *BHRJ* will also feature short Developments in the Field (DiF) pieces and book reviews. By publishing the highest quality research on all BHR aspects, *BHRJ* not only seeks to advance the discussion in the BHR field but also help in creating a corporate culture conducive to integrating human rights into day-to-day business operations. *BHRJ*'s inaugural issue will be launched at the 4th Annual UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva on 16 November 2015.

Objectives

This Session will showcase the value of a dedicated platform like *BHRJ* in leading the debate in the BHR field and fostering constructive dialogue amongst all relevant stakeholders. It will explore the role and importance of research and scholarship in promoting business respect for human rights. The Session will highlight how research can help in unpacking complex issues in the area of BHR and suggest ways to overcome dilemmas of businesses that operate in diverse environments. It will also highlight the importance of collaborative engagement between scholars, practitioners, corporate executives and civil society actors to successfully navigate complex BHR challenges.

Format

The Session is designed as a sharing of diverse perspectives on the role of research and scholarship in promoting business respect for human rights. After brief presentations by speakers, there will be time for questions and comments by diverse stakeholders. The discussion will be followed by a reception sponsored by Cambridge University Press.

Speakers

The Session will feature the following speakers representing diverse expertise, fields, gender and geographical regions:

Moderator

Anita Ramasastry, Professor, University of Washington School of Law; Editor-in-Chief, *BHRJ*

Speakers

- 1) Florian Wettstein, Professor and Director, Institute for Business Ethics, University of St. Gallen; Editor-in-Chief, *BHRJ*
- 2) Olivier De Schutter, Professor of Law, University of Louvain; Former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (2008-2014)
- 3) Michael K Addo, Senior Lecturer, University of Exeter; Member, UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights
- 4) Liang Xiaohui, Chief Researcher, Office for Social Responsibility, China National Textile and Apparel Council
- 5) Aliou Diouf, Francophone Africa Researcher, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre
- 6) Rebecca O'Rourke, Senior Commissioning Editor, Cambridge Journals

Organisers

The Session is organised by *BHRJ*'s four founding Editors-in-Chief (Surya Deva, Anita Ramasastry, Michael Santoro, and Florian Wettstein) in collaboration with Cambridge University Press. For any queries relating to the Session or *BHRJ*, please email us: BHRJ@cambridge.org