

INVITATION



SIDE EVENT

Engaging the Private Sector in Post-2015: Human Rights and Accountability

Thursday, 25 June, 1:15-2:45pm

Conference Room C at UN Headquarters

UN Member States have been hailing the private sector as key partners in implementing the post-2015 agenda. UNCTAD estimates that the bill to deliver the sustainable development goals would be between USD 5 to 7 trillion. Governments alone may not be able to mobilise such vast amounts of resources, and are therefore calling for more public – private partnerships. In addition, there is a need for innovative resource mobilisation to deliver the goals. These realities, among others, have led to an increased presence of International Financial institutions (IFIs) and the private sector in the sustainable development arena.

The impetus to catalyse and leverage private and non-traditional finance sources is concerning in the absence of accompanying commitments on accountability both for the corporate sector and the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs). Governments are by virtue of international law, including various human rights instruments that they have signed and ratified, duty bound to ensure adequate steps are taken to ensure human rights are respected and protected. The corporate sector, including multinational companies, are powerful economic actors operating in multiple countries. Through their very size, many of these large companies wield a lot of political and capital power and influence, especially in weak legal and regulatory jurisdictions. In such scenarios, corporates can be directly or indirectly involved in abusing human rights without any form of remedy for the victims.

In order to explore this subject area, Amnesty International along with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, the Association for Women's Rights in Development, and the Center for Economic and Social Rights are holding a side event during the June intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

Objectives of the event include:

1. Identifying current gaps based on existing research on responsibility and accountability of the private sector in delivering sustainable development as part of the post-2015 agenda.
2. Identifying mechanisms at the national, regional and global level for strengthening state duty to protect human rights in private – public partnerships.

Speakers:

Welcome - Ms. Susan Alzner, Officer in Charge, UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)

Moderator - Mr. Savio Carvalho, Senior Advisor, International Development and Human Rights, Amnesty International

H.E. Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Mission of Brasil to the UN

Ms. Lucy Graham, Legal Adviser, Business and Human Rights Team, Amnesty International

Mr. Niko Lusiani - Director, Human Rights in Economic Policy, Center for Economic and Social Rights

Mr. Leonardo SC Castilho - Human Rights Officer, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Ms. Alejandra Scampini - Lead Advocacy Associate, Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)

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The following questions will be explored at the side event:

- What effective measures can be put in place to secure and guarantee that no activities financed by the private sector lead to human rights violations or abuses?
- How can we ensure that private sector actors respect robust human rights due diligence at the country level?
- What mechanisms can be put in place for effective monitoring and implementation mechanisms independently and as part of the Post 2015 follow up and review?
- How do we ensure adequate access to information on all planned activities of the private sector that may impact on members of the public and in particular specific communities, such as indigenous peoples, to ensure their effective participation in decision-making?
- How do we ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making of the private sector at local and national levels?
- How can we create and strengthen effective, accountable and transparent remedial institutions at all levels?
- How can we ensure governments make it mandatory for companies domiciled or headquartered in the country to carry out adequate human rights due diligence throughout their global operations and due diligence prior to a company undertaking any investment in the SDGs?