



HARVARD Kennedy School

MOSSAVAR-RAHMANI CENTER
for Business and Government

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November 4, 2014

Mr. Didier Burkhalter
Federal Councilor
Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Federal Palace, West Wing
CH-3003 Bern
Switzerland

Ms. Simonetta Sommaruga
Federal Councilor
Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police
Federal Palace, West Wing
CH-3003 Bern
Switzerland

Dear Federal Councilors Burkhalter and Sommaruga:

I write to you in my capacity as the former United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative for Business and Human Rights, and the author of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which the Human Rights Council endorsed in June 2011.

Switzerland was a strong supporter of my UN mandate from day one, for which I remain deeply appreciative. I also take the liberty of commending you for the concrete proposals on due diligence that were included in the "Rapport de droit comparé. Mécanismes de diligence en matière de droits de l'homme et d'environnement en rapport avec les activités d'entreprises suisses à l'étranger" that your Departments issued in May of this year. The approach proposed in that report represents an excellent example of the "smart mix" of legal and policy measures prescribed by the UN Guiding Principles.

I was also very pleased to note that the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council proposed to follow up on this report. Indeed, I understand that the National Council will soon vote on motion 14.3671, "Mise en oeuvre du rapport de droit comparé du Conseil fédéral sur la responsabilité des entreprises en matière de droits humains et d'environnement."

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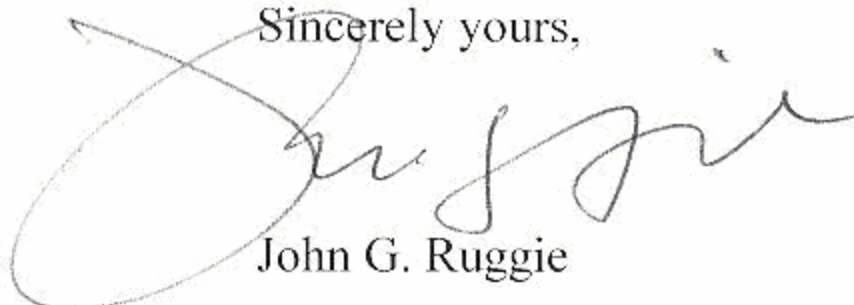
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When I presented the Guiding Principles to the Human Rights Council I said that its endorsement would not represent the end of business and human rights challenges, but that it would mark the end of the beginning. By adopting motion 14.3671, the Swiss National Council would take an important step “beyond the end of the beginning” and continue Switzerland’s leadership, not only in developing but more importantly in implementing the UN Guiding Principles and, thereby, helping to reduce the incidence of corporate-related human rights harm.

With thanks for your continuing contributions,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Ruggie", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name "John G. Ruggie".

John G. Ruggie