

**CALL FOR PAPERS: AN INVITATION TO THE CONFERENCE ON CORPORATE
ACCOUNTABILITY, BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS:
AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE, JUNE 2017**

*Rethinking the promotion of human rights conscious and accountable corporate behaviour,
governance, oversight and regulation in Africa*

Organiser: Centre for Applied Legal Studies, University of the Witwatersrand
Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa
Southern African Resource Watch

Venue and Date: Johannesburg, South Africa; 28 to 30 June 2017

Rationale

This Pan-African conference on Business and Human Rights will be held under the theme 'Corporate Accountability: An African Perspective'. The purpose of the proposed conference is to discuss how the business and human rights framework can better accommodate, and be more responsive to, the African political, social, legal and economic context. It also responds to the de-emphasis, on a global level, of the voice and opinions of those in Africa on the narrative, characterisation and theorising on business and human rights.

The conference will bring together academics, theorist, and thought leaders from Africa to discuss the business and human rights movement and the extent to which, in its current form, it is able (or unable) to address human rights violations committed by corporate actors in Africa.

Specifically, the conference hopes to:

- Identify shortcomings in the business and human rights narrative to the extent that it fails to appreciate the social, legal, political and economic realities in Africa;
- Determine the extent to which the inequality between the Global South and Global North in the international arena has skewed the business and human rights narrative in favour of developed economies;
- Identify specific case studies and practical examples;
- Raise key issues that should be addressed in order to make the business and human rights regime more responsive to the African context; and
- Develop new tools of analysis in evaluating the African agenda for business and human rights so that it is both practical and substantive in content.

Nature of the Conference

In order to ensure that the speakers are given adequate time to discuss their papers and the opportunity to explore their ideas and opinions with those interested in their paper the conference will take on a non-conventional structure. It will divide participants into

smaller groups to ensure more in depth and thoughtful discussions. The details of this methodology are explained in the Concept Note, which accompanies this invitation.

Participants

We strongly encourage emerging academics, theorist and thought leaders to submit their abstracts.

Papers will be selected by CALS editorial team based on a review of the abstracts. We ask all interested speakers to submit abstracts of a maximum of 500 words by 11 February 2017. The first draft of the papers will be due on the 15 May 2017. The papers will be reviewed by the CALS' editorial team, which may provide comments before the conference which is set to take place in June 2017. Final papers will be due on 1 September 2017. The manuscript will be submitted for publication in January 2018.

Please submit your abstract to Prof Bonita Meyersfeld (bonita.meyersfeld@wits.ac.za).

The conference is fully funded by the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa and all costs of the speakers will be covered by the conference organisers.

Important deadlines

- Abstract submission: Saturday, 11 February 2017
- Notification of Acceptance: Monday, 20 February 2017
- Full Paper Submissions: Monday, 15 May 2017
- Conference dates: Wednesday to Friday, 28 to 30 June 2017
- Final Full Paper submission: Friday, 1 September 2017

Publication

The papers will be published subject to blind peer review. The publication will seek to adjust the dearth of literature by African authors about the impact of business and human rights in Africa.

We hope that will be able to join us at this first Pan-African business and human rights conference, for Africa and by Africans.