



PRESS RELEASE

(for immediate release)

New portal focuses on links between business and children's rights



Geneva, 14 Jun 2011 – Today the non-profit Business & Human Rights Resource Centre launched an [online portal on “Business & Children”](#).

The portal provides up-to-date information on the many ways that companies impact children's rights. Issues covered range from child labour to workplace parental leave; from sexual exploitation to education. Each topic includes a concise introduction followed by examples of positive initiatives companies are taking, allegations of abuses, and company responses.

The portal was launched today at a side-event to the 2011 United Nations Human Rights Council, entitled “Children's Rights & Business.” The event was co-organised by UNICEF and Business & Human Rights Resource Centre.

Ulf Karlberg, Co-Chair of trustees of the Resource Centre, said: *“Approximately one third of the world's people are children. No company can ignore its impact on this vulnerable sector of the population. The new portal brings news and reports on how companies are affecting children to an influential, global audience – helping people to make decisions that are in children's best interest.”*

Features of the portal include:

- **Issues:** Brief introductions to subjects such as child labour, dangerous products, education, forced labour, pollution damaging health, pregnancy discrimination, sexual exploitation and trafficking, followed by links to relevant news and reports
- **International standards** relating to children's rights and business
- **Positive initiatives**
- **Alleged abuses**
- **Lawsuits against companies**
- **Practical guidance**

The portal also provides a prominent platform for the **Children's Rights & Business Principles Initiative**. This joint initiative by UNICEF, UN Global Compact and Save the Children aims to develop a set of principles offering concrete guidance on what business can do to respect and support children's rights. The draft principles are [open for public comment until 15 July 2011](#).

All the information on the portal is accessible free of charge. It comes from a broad range of sources, and reflects the excellent work being done on this subject by children's rights organizations at the local, national and international levels. The content is currently predominantly in English, with some items in Spanish and French. More material will be added on a regular basis – and the non-English language content expanded.

The Resource Centre encourages people of all ages and in all regions to send us suggested additions. Our researchers based in Colombia, Hong Kong, India, Senegal, South Africa and Ukraine will be in close touch with children's rights advocates and businesspeople in their regions, to ensure we highlight their initiatives.

Annabel Short, Resource Centre Programme Director and manager of this project, said: *“There is growing awareness globally of companies’ human rights responsibilities. In that context, we are delighted to launch this special portal focused on the rights of children. We hope it provides increased recognition and accountability for children who are affected by corporate activities, NGOs with greater exposure of their work in this field, and business with tools and examples to follow.”*

The Business & Children portal joins the Resource Centre’s five existing portals:

[“Business, Conflict & Peace”](#)

[“Getting Started”](#)

[“Tools & Guidance”](#)

[“UN Special Representative on Business & Human Rights”](#)

[“Corporate Legal Accountability”](#)

In 2012 the Resource Centre plans to launch a further portal on “Business & Freedom of Association”.

Speakers at the launch event at the UN in Geneva are:

- **Leila Pakkala**, Director of Private Fundraising and Partnerships, UNICEF
- **Henrik Holmquist**, Advisor – Office of the Secretary-General, Save the Children Sweden
- **Marta Maurás**, Independent expert, Committee on the Rights of the Child
- **Ulf Karlberg**, Co-chair, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre
- **Christopher Avery**, Director, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

The portal and the entire Resource Centre website are engineered by [Jamkit](#), specialists in web solutions for the not-for-profit sector. Jamkit is part of the [Blue Fountain Systems](#) group of companies.

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (www.business-humanrights.org) tracks the human rights impacts (positive & negative) of 5000 companies in over 180 countries, and provides guidance tools to assist all those working in this field. The site is updated hourly and receives 1.5 million hits per month.

Mary Robinson chairs its 80-member International Advisory Network. Its 23 Academic Partners include leading institutes in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America.

For further information about the Resource Centre, see the [“About us”](#) section of the website.

If you have questions about the portal please contact:

Annabel Short, Program Director (based in New York): short@business-humanrights.org tel. +1 212 564 9160

Malena Bengtsson, Researcher (based in London): bengtsson@business-humanrights.org tel +44 (20) 7636 7774

See the Resource Centre website for [contact details of additional team members](#) based in Colombia, Hong Kong, India, Senegal, South Africa, UK, Ukraine, USA

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