On the Horizon  •  A l’Horizon  •  En el Horizonte
A practical bulletin on what is ahead in the field of business & human rights

Issue 31 - June 2013

This bulletin is prepared by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre for those working in this field. It presents contributions from a number of experts & organizations, and is designed to keep all of us informed of future initiatives.

If you would like to contribute to our next bulletin planned for early September 2013, please send your announcement about an event, publication or initiative taking place after 6 September to Daniel Vince-Archer: vince-archer (at) business-humanrights.org. Please keep the contribution under 200 words. The deadline for contributions is 27 August.

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1. Forthcoming report on innovations in respecting rights in global supply chains

Shift will shortly release a report based on its work with the Global Social Compliance Program (GSCP) and its member companies identifying innovative approaches that incentivise good labour rights practices in global supply chains. The report aims to advance understanding of how major brands, retailers and manufacturers can leverage improved respect for human rights through their business relationships, in line with Principle 19 of the the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

In recent years, leading companies have started testing models designed to increase the pace and sustainability of improvements in labour rights in their supply chains. However, there is little shared learning about these innovations. The report will present examples of promising approaches, which can be adopted and adapted by other companies.

The report will be available on Shift's website at: [http://www.shiftproject.org/project/identifying-innovations-global-supply-chains](http://www.shiftproject.org/project/identifying-innovations-global-supply-chains).

→ Contributed by Rachel Davis, Managing Director, Shift, rachel.davis (at) shiftproject.org

2. Inaugural Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct - Paris, 26-27 Jun

The inaugural Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct (26-27 June – OECD Conference Centre, Paris) comes at a time of unprecedented international convergence on what constitutes responsible business conduct. From multilaterally agreed corporate responsibility instruments to national policies and specific codes of conduct, there is a widely shared recognition that responsibility has to be an integral part of any healthy business environment. At the same time, implementation remains a challenge – collective action is needed to ensure that tragedies like Rana Plaza never happen again.

The new Global Forum, hosted by the OECD, will serve as a platform for strengthening international dialogue and advancing experience sharing. Governments, businesses, trade unions, civil society and international organizations will come together to address the core challenge of how to do well while doing no harm in an effort to contribute to sustainable development and enduring social progress.

Please visit the Global Forum website for registration information and draft agenda.

→ Contributed by Carly Avery, Communications Officer, OECD, investment (at) oecd.org

3. Launch of “Tax Transparency” report on where firms operating in poor countries pay taxes - 12 Jun

A report by Swedwatch, “Tax Transparency – Where do Corporations with Operations in Developing Countries Pay Taxes?”, will be launched on 12 June (08:30-11:00) at Intercontinental Hotel, Lusaka, at an event organised by Diakonia Zambia.

In the report, Swedwatch has investigated how some of Sweden’s largest multinational corporations – Ericsson, Atlas Copco, Sandvik and SKF – reason and act in regard to tax payments in developing countries and in Zambia specifically. The report calls for more transparency on tax payments on a country-by-country level as the information the companies provide does not allow the government, civil society and the public to make informed judgments about their operations. Especially in a country like Zambia that loses huge amounts every year due to tax evasion, there is an urgent need for greater transparency from foreign multinationals operating in the country.

The report and a short film (7 min) will be available at [http://www.swedwatch.org/en](http://www.swedwatch.org/en)

→ Contributed by Kristina Areskog Bjurling, Swedwatch, kristina (at) swedwatch.org

4. New OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct

Prof. Dr. Roel Nieuwenkamp started this week as Chair of the new OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct. This unique intergovernmental Working Party is dedicated to corporate responsibility issues.

This Working Party is responsible for the implementation of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the only intergovernmental standard on CSR with a grievance mechanism.
As Chair, Roel will dedicate his time to promoting the OECD Guidelines, and providing leadership for the “Proactive agenda” envisioned by the OECD Guidelines, which consists of due diligence programmes related, for example, to conflict minerals, the financial sector, and responsible mining. He will also work on outreach to non-adhering countries to “level the playing field”.

Before this new assignment, Roel was Director of International Trade Policy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. In that capacity, he was Chair of the negotiations of the revised OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which were concluded successfully in 2011.

→ Contributed by OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct

5. Lawyers for Better Business events on tax justice & role of lawyers in Johannesburg & Geneva

Lawyers for Better Business is organising a conference at University of Johannesburg on 21 November, entitled “Tax and Poverty: A Role for Lawyers”.

The event is timed to discuss the findings of the International Bar Association Human Rights Institute Task Force on Illicit Financial Flows, Poverty and Human Rights and the launch of several tax justice initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa. Panellists who have been invited or confirmed include practising lawyers, academics and tax justice campaigners from sub-Saharan Africa and other regions of the global South. We are currently seeking funding with the aim of making the conference free to attend, with an invited audience of policymakers, lawyers, NGOs and other experts.

We are also proposing a session for the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva in December, to discuss how lessons learned from the South African conference can be of use in other parts of the world.

For more information, including if you are interested in supporting the Johannesburg conference, please contact Adrienne Margolis at Lawyers for Better Business, adrienne (at) l4bb.org.

→ Contributed by Adrienne Margolis, Lawyers for Better Business, adrienne (at) l4bb.org

6. Forthcoming events organised by Essex Business and Human Rights Project, future collaborations

a. Workshop on implications of Kiobel decision: The Essex Business and Human Rights Project (EBHR), Transitional Justice Network, School of Law, Human Rights Centre and Amnesty International UK will be holding an expert workshop on the implications of the US Supreme Court decision in Kiobel. The aim of the workshop is to bring together academics and practitioners working with several relevant jurisdictions in order to provide an occasion for them to compare their views on:

- what does the Kiobel decision say, and in the light of it what are the future prospects for litigation against companies under the US Alien Tort Statute?
- what are the prospects for developing alternative approaches to corporate liability within different jurisdictions which might fill gaps in litigation possibilities created by the decision?

The workshop will take place on 13 June at Amnesty International UK’s Head Office in London (The Human Rights Action Centre, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA) from 13:30 to 17:45. For more information, please contact ebhrproject (at) gmail.com.

b. Roundtable on liability of parent companies for damages caused by subsidiaries: As a follow-up to the issues raised by Corporate Liability in a New Setting: Shell and the Changing Legal Landscape for the Multinational Oil Industry in the Niger Delta Report (“The Niger Delta Report”), EBHR will be organising a roundtable meeting on potential changes in patterns of liability for parent companies for damages caused by their subsidiaries. Invitees will include leading business and human rights academics and practitioners involved in recent legal developments in this area, notably the April 2012 Chandler v Cape Plc decision. The roundtable is being planned for 18 September at Amnesty International UK’s Head Office in London.

The Niger Delta Report, published on 10 December 2012, is accessible on EBHR’s website:
http://www.essex.ac.uk/ebhr/documents/niger_delta_report.pdf

c. Report on Senegalese mining legislation & follow-up actions: A report commissioned by Amnesty International Netherlands on the adequacy of Senegal’s mining legislation to ensure human rights, social and environmental protection in light of international standards is due to be published. EBHR plans to take the project forward in the
coming months and will be advising the Government of Senegal on reforming its mining legislation to integrate international human rights standards.

→ Contributed by Iulia Nicolescu, Essex Business & Human Rights Project, imnico (at) essex.ac.uk

7. Event on how business & civil society can tackle child poverty & social exclusion - Brussels, 13 Jun

On 13 June, KAURI, UN Global Compact Network Belgium and UNICEF will organise an afternoon session to inspire participants on smart collaboration opportunities between businesses and the social sector to make child poverty history. Governments and welfare organizations can’t tackle this alone. Social innovation models are emerging for poverty reduction. These models seek innovative and smart collaboration between different actors of society. By creating work, companies enable people to gain confidence, offer them abilities to develop their talents and help them to create a better future for their children. Companies can also look to welfare organizations for positive attitudes and values, and learn how these can be incorporated in fair business practices. Ethical considerations in dealing with poor children as consumers can have a big impact on poverty reduction. Finally, honest marketing, providing access to basic services and awareness-raising of consumers can help reduce social exclusion.

Register for the event here: http://www.kauri.be/activity/BW4WG214.aspx. Please contact David Leyssens (david.leyssens (at) kauri.be) with any questions.

→ Contributed by Iris Van der Veken, Chair, UN Global Compact Network Belgium, Iris.VanderVeken (at) rosyblue.be

8. UN Global Compact UK Network and Sedex to co-host Supply Chain Series - starts 10 Jun

The UN Global Compact UK Network and responsible supply chain specialists Sedex have partnered on an exciting series of supply chain webinars and in-person events to drive improvements and convergence in responsible business practices. The series of events will look at key sustainability issues in emerging economies. The first event is a webinar and will take place on 10 June at 14:00-15:00 UK time. The focus will be on supply chains in Africa; subsequent events will focus on China, Southeast Asia and South America. To get more information on this first webinar, and to register, please visit: http://www.sedexglobal.com/news-events/ungc/.

→ Contributed by Marianne Voss, Stakeholder Executive (Americas), Marianne.Voss (at) sedexglobal.com

9. Invitation to register for the Zermatt Summit - Switzerland, 20-21 Jun

The President of the Zermatt Summit Foundation, Christopher Wasserman, is honoured to invite On the Horizon readers to participate in the fourth edition of the Zermatt Summit, Switzerland on 20 and 21 June.

The theme of this fourth edition is “Business & NGOs: Building partnerships of winners”. The Zermatt Summit was created in 2010 as a platform to promote a constructive, action-oriented dialogue between civil society and business. It is our conviction that it is through this kind of dialogue and through a better interaction between civil society, business and governments that we will be able to achieve a more inclusive globalisation.

Online registration is required to confirm your participation (deadline 10 June): http://www.zermattsummit.org/registration. By selecting “Member of a Partner Network” and then “On the Horizon”, you will enjoy a preferential partner rate of participation of 999 CHF (33% discount).

For further information, please feel free to contact us either by phone (+ 41 21 644 20 54) or by email (assistant (at) zermattsummit.org), or visit our website www.zermattsummit.org.

→ Contributed by Jacqui Manini, Communication Manager, Zermatt Summit Foundation, jacqui.manini (at) zermattsummit.org

10. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre appoints new Executive Director: Phil Bloomer

Phil Bloomer has been appointed the new Executive Director of Business & Human Rights Resource Centre; he will start work on 1 September when current Director Chris Avery begins his retirement. Phil brings with him 30 years of experience in human rights and social justice. This includes leadership positions at Oxfam GB since 1995 – most recently Director of the Campaigns and Policy Division – and 11 years working in Latin America and the Caribbean on human rights and economic justice. Click here for the full announcement about Phil’s appointment.
11. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre to revamp its website

We will shortly undertake a comprehensive upgrade and revamp of our website. We are in the process of identifying the right IT firm to undertake this ambitious task. We are inviting everybody to send us their thoughts on what is most valuable about our current website, what isn’t (what people would like to see less of), and what specific new features and improvements people would like to suggest. You can send us your ideas via email or via this public survey. We hope to launch the new website by the end of 2013.

→ Contributed by the staff of Business & Human Rights Resource Centre. For more information, please contact Mauricio Lazala: lazala (at) business-humanrights.org

12. Corporate Legal Accountability Quarterly Bulletin – future issues available in English, French & Spanish

In the coming months, the Resource Centre will issue the Corporate Legal Accountability Quarterly Bulletin in French as well as in English and Spanish. This bulletin assists all those following corporate legal accountability issues and highlights key developments, new cases profiled on our Corporate Legal Accountability Portal, updates to existing case profiles, and other news.

Please contact us if you wish to receive the bulletin, specifying the language version you wish to receive.

→ Contributed by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre: Sif Thorgeirsson, Manager, Corporate Legal Accountability Project, thorgeirsson (at) business-humanrights.org, and Elodie Aba, Legal Researcher, aba (at) business-humanrights.org

13. Forthcoming briefing on Business & Freedom of Association

In the coming months, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre will publish its first briefing on Business & Freedom of Association. The briefing will highlight reports from a range of sources about corporate impacts on freedom of association globally, summarising trends and developments in this field over recent years.

→ Contributed by Danielle McMullan, Researcher, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, mcmullan (at) business-humanrights.org

Africa


The Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA), Social Accountability International and Danish Institute for Human Rights will be hosting the first multi-stakeholder forum convened under the international project “Pillars in Practice” in Zimbabwe. This will be on Thursday 20 June at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Park Lane in Harare.

The forum will be held under the theme “Advancing the Implementation of the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights in Zimbabwe's Mining Sector”. This will be an opportunity for government, industry, and civil society organizations to engage in the exchange of ideas, opinions and strategies and the formation of initiatives and alliances which could result from this important multi-stakeholder forum. The agenda items cover a broad spectrum including detailed introductory aspects of business and human rights. These include: Corporate Social Responsibility; UN “Protect, Respect, Remedy” Framework; UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; and UN Working Group on Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises. Aside from the theoretical background, some topics relating to Zimbabwe will be covered, including an overview of human rights and business in practice. Additionally, group discussions will be held on human rights priorities in the mining sector.

→ Contributed by Mutusod Dhliwayo, Director, ZELA, mutusod (at) zela.org

15. Forthcoming reports to be launched by Kenya Human Rights Commission

A new report, “Who is Pulling the Strings? The Elusive Quest for a Livelihood in the Sisal Estates of Kenya”, commissioned by the Kenya Human Rights Commission to look into human rights violations in sisal farms and
their impact on workers’ livelihoods, will be launched in late June. The report was validated on 22 March at the Hotel Intercontinental with participation from numerous stakeholders.

The Kenya Human Rights Commission will also be launching a report on the adverse effects that the proposed Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor project will have on indigenous communities in Lamu especially the Awer and the Fisherfolk communities. The report recommends steps and action to be taken to mitigate these effects. The launch will take place in July in Lamu (date and venue to be confirmed).

→ Contributed by Jackline Wanja, Kenya Human Rights Commission, JWanja (at) khrc.or.ke

16. Malawi: Centre for Social Concern to lobby for bill to address exploitation of workers in tobacco farms

The Centre for Social Concern will be conducting a series of activities in June to lobby for the tabling, enactment and enforcement of the Tenancy Labour Bill (2010). Agriculture employs 87% of the work force in Malawi and accounts for 90% of the foreign exchange earnings. 65% of the foreign exchange earnings come from tobacco. Tobacco is grown primarily in family-owned smallholder farms and in tobacco estates, though a few major commercial farms exist. Tenant farmers are often migrant farmers who are contracted by the landowner to cultivate the crop. On that basis, many tenants and their households often enter into cycles of increasing debt, misery and poverty. The tenants are subject to untold exploitation. Their produce is often under-priced because estate owners deliberately rate it as lower-quality than it is. Estate owners take advantage of the situation by charging high interest rates. Women are subjected to mental, sexual and physical abuses by landowners and their husbands. Once enacted, the proposed Tenancy Labour Bill will address these forms of exploitation.

→ Contributed by Mathias Burton Kafunda, Centre for Social Concern, mathiasburton (at) cfscmalawi.org

17. One-day provincial stakeholders’ conference on artisanal miners - Mutare, Zimbabwe, 26 Jul

Following continued incidents of human rights abuse against artisanal miners by mining companies operating in Manicaland Province, Centre for Research & Development (CRD) will host a one-day national conference in July in Mutare. The conference will invite critical stakeholders in the extractive sector including government, mining companies, community-based organizations and experts. Participants will be invited to deliberate and find lasting solutions that address the issue of artisanal miners and find best practices that promote sustainable livelihoods for communities living in the mining areas. The recommendations that come out of this conference will be presented to the Ministry of Mines for consideration. The ministry is currently consulting stakeholders for proposals to be included in the new mining policy document in Zimbabwe.

→ Contributed by James Mupfumi, Acting Director, CRD, jamesmupfumi (at) yahoo.com

18. Malawi: Union to target 5000 mine workers in recruitment campaign

Chemical, Energy, Mining and Allied Workers Union (CEMAWU) is a trade union formed to represent workers in the chemical, energy (liquid fuels, lubricants, and ethanol), and mining sectors in Malawi. CEMAWU has noted the urgent need to organise mineworkers in Karonga and Rumphi in Northern Region and some mines in Southern Region. CEMAWU is targeting close to 5000 mine workers to be organised. Currently these mineworkers are not organised and are vulnerable to denials of their core labour rights. We are planning to conduct the organising and recruitment campaign in August and September 2013 and expect to meet government officials, workers, employers and communities surrounding uranium mines in Malawi.

→ Contributed by Francis Antonio, CEMAWU, francisantonio (at) yahoo.com

Launch of “Tax Transparency” report on where firms operating in poor countries pay taxes - Lusaka, 12 Jun

See item 3 above, in the International section. We include reference to this event here in the Africa section because it takes place in Lusaka, Zambia.

Lawyers for Better Business events on tax justice & role of lawyers in Johannesburg & Geneva

See item 5 above, in the International section. We include reference to these events here in the Africa section because one takes place in Johannesburg.

Future collaboration by Essex Business and Human Rights Project re Senegalese mining legislation

See item 6.c. above, in the International section. We include reference to this event here in the Africa section because it refers to Senegal.
Shareholders to pressure Caterpillar over subsidiaries’ sales to Sudan

See item 22 below, in the Americas section. We include reference to this shareholder resolution here in the Africa section because it relates to Caterpillar's operations in Sudan.

Americas

19. Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights - Medellín, Colombia, 28-30 Aug

The United Nations Working Group on business & human rights, the United Nations Development Programme’s Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Government of Colombia will co-host the first Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights for Latin America and the Caribbean, 28-30 August in Medellin, Colombia.

The forum provides a multi-stakeholder regional platform for constructive dialogue on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Participants will include representatives from global, regional and domestic businesses, industry associations, governments, international and regional bodies, trade unions, civil society, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders.

The main goals are to provide capacity-building opportunities for practitioners and civil society, identify material issues on business and human rights in the region, and identify emerging innovative practices designed to manage corporate impacts and enable equitable development with a human rights approach. Results will feed into the global Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva on 2-4 December.

Organisers will engage relevant stakeholders in the process of preparing the forum and to reach out broadly across the Latin American and Caribbean region to ensure wide and balanced representation. Participation will be subject to space limitations (approximately 350). Registration is online and started on 3 June. For enquiries, please contact regionalforumbr (at) ohchr.org or maria.eugenia.boza (at) undp.org.

→ Contributed by Secretariat (Regional Forums on Business and Human Rights), United Nations Working Group on business & human rights, regionalforumbr (at) ohchr.org


[Unofficial translation by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre from Spanish original]

While Argentina’s justice system has hitherto had the merit of systematically investigating the violent crimes committed during the last military dictatorship, it has, to date, left out the economic factors that facilitated the dictatorship. Horacio Verbitsky and Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky bring together various contributions in a new book, “Outstanding scores to settle. The economic accomplices of the military dictatorship”, expected to be published in September 2013. The contributions reveal complicity by economic and other private actors with the military dictatorship. The cases of business complicity discussed in the book range from the role of private companies such as Ledesma, Mercedes Benz and Ford, to the financing role of banks, to the roles of the Papel Prensa company and the newspaper La Nueva Provincia. The book also discusses economic pillage during the dictatorship; the role of lawyers, business organizations and scholars; and general macroeconomic and international angles. Furthermore, theoretical questions on transitional justice and the legal accountability of non-governmental actors for complicity are also addressed.

Specialists including Naomi Roht-Arriaza, Leonardo Filippini, Eduardo Basualdo, Claudio Tognonato, Victoria Basualdo, Federico Delgado, Damián Loreti, Tomás Ojea Quintana, Mario Rapoport, Alfredo Calcgano, Jorge Taiana, and Héctor Recalde contribute their theoretical and empirical insights to efforts of collective-memory-building, remedy and prevention. Most of all, they contribute to the creation of a more complete narrative of the years of the military dictatorship in Argentina. The book will be published by Siglo Veintiuno Editores, Buenos Aires (see the online catalogue of the publisher here).

→ For further information, please contact Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky at juanpablobohos (at) gmail.com

21. Evaluation of reports by US companies on their human rights commitments & performance in Myanmar

On 23 May 2013, the US Government’s Burma Responsible Investment Reporting Requirements took effect. US corporations newly investing in Burma (Myanmar) are now mandated to report on their operations, policies, procedures and impacts. The first reports are due on 1 July.
Over the past year, the US Government has paved the way for increased US investment in Burma despite ongoing, severe violence in resource-rich areas of the country. The reporting requirements are attached to a General License authorising new investment in Burma that was issued in July 2012.

Through EIRIS Conflict Risk Network, investors have been urging the US Government to exercise caution in policy toward Burma. During the public consultation on the draft requirements, EIRIS Conflict Risk Network and its investor members made joint submissions in October 2012 and March 2013.

In response to public comments, the government strengthened and clarified the requirements. However, they still do not compel public reporting on the prevention and mitigation of financial, operational and legal risks.

EIRIS Conflict Risk Network plans to use the reporting requirements and reports submitted as a baseline for evaluating corporate human rights commitments and performance in Burma, while also gathering data from other sources. To find out more or to get involved in coordinated investor engagement with corporations over their policies and operations in Burma, contact EIRIS Conflict Risk Network Director Kathy Mulvey (tel. +1 202 495 2971 or email mulvey (at) conflictrisknetwork.org).

→ Contributed by Kathy Mulvey, Director, EIRIS Conflict Risk Network, mulvey (at) conflictrisknetwork.org

22. Shareholders to pressure Caterpillar over subsidiaries’ sales to Sudan

Caterpillar, Inc. has been classified as "Scrutinized" in EIRIS Conflict Risk Network’s Sudan Company Report since 2012 because several of the corporation's non-US subsidiaries reportedly sell Caterpillar products in Sudan for use on heavy construction, mining, drilling and power generating projects. A shareholder resolution submitted by the New York State Common Retirement Fund (an EIRIS Conflict Risk Network member) calls upon Caterpillar to take steps to ensure that the company's foreign subsidiaries are not doing business with the Government of Sudan, over concerns about the government's involvement in human rights abuses and sponsorship of terrorism.

The corporation petitioned the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to block the proposal, but the SEC ruled in favour of the proponent, so discussion of Caterpillar’s Sudan operations will go before shareholders at its annual meeting on 12 June.

If you support this shareholder resolution or have questions about EIRIS Conflict Risk Network's research on corporations operating in Sudan, please contact Senior Research and Engagement Specialist Eryn Schornick (schornick (at) conflictrisknetwork.org).

→ Contributed by Eryn Schornick, EIRIS Conflict Risk Network, schornick (at) conflictrisknetwork.org

Caterpillar’s official response to the shareholder resolution regarding Sudan is available in its proxy statement for its 2013 Annual Meeting of Stockholders – click here and scroll to page 27, “Proposal 9 – Sales to Sudan”.

23. Panel on business and the “Responsibility to Protect” - Washington, DC, 7 Jun

One Earth Future Foundation and George Washington University's Institute for Corporate Responsibility invite you to a panel discussion to discuss the question of when, why, and how the private sector can contribute to protecting civilians from mass atrocities under the framework of the "Responsibility to Protect" as described by the UN. The discussion will take place on Friday 7 June from 10:00-12:00 (noon) at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, DC.

The panellists include:

• Eamon Aloyo, One Earth Future Foundation
• Jonas Claes, US Institute of Peace
• Raymond Gilpin, dean of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies at National Defense University
• Edward Luck, dean of the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego
• Patrick Obath, former chairman of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and Shell executive
• John Forrer, Institute for Corporate Responsibility at GWU, moderator

For further information, click here or contact Roberta Spivak of One Earth Future Foundation, rspivak (at) oneearthfuture.org or by phone, +1 303.533.1707.
24. Decision forthcoming in US case against military contractors re involvement in Abu Ghraib

The district court judge in the Eastern District of Virginia hearing the case brought by four Iraqi former detainees at Abu Ghraib against private contractor CACI ordered supplemental briefing in light of the US Supreme Court’s 17 April 2013 decision in *Kiobel v Royal Dutch Petroleum*. A hearing was held on 10 May 2013 and a decision is expected soon.

The men allege that the contractor, which provided interrogators to the US military, bears responsibility under the US Alien Tort Statute (ATS) for war crimes, torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment as part of a conspiracy to torture. CACI argued that the ATS claims should be dismissed, asserting that the Supreme Court held that the ATS did not apply outside the United States. Plaintiffs argued, first, that this was not a case requiring the extraterritorial application of the ATS since the claims occurred in a detention centre under the exclusive authority and control of the US Government. Next, plaintiffs argued that the presumption against extraterritorial application of the ATS was displaced as this case “touches and concerns” the US “with sufficient force”. More information can be found at: [http://www.ccrjustice.org/ourcases/current-cases/al-shimari-v-caci-et-al](http://www.ccrjustice.org/ourcases/current-cases/al-shimari-v-caci-et-al).

25. UN Working Group on business & human rights to consider FIDH submission on Bangladesh

Following the Rana Plaza building tragedy in April, FIDH and its member organization in Bangladesh, ODHIKAR, have formally called on the United Nations to clearly set out the responsibilities of all actors involved in human rights abuses in the Bangladeshi garment sector. Their submission requested that the UN Working Group on business & human rights undertake a country visit to Bangladesh and look into the working conditions and labour rights of garment workers. The Working Group shall be looking into this submission during its next session, to be held from 17 to 21 June.

The state of the garment sector in Bangladesh is particularly emblematic of human rights abuses occurring throughout global supply chains, illustrating a pattern of long-standing abuses linked to corporate activity and the inefficiency of initiatives taken so far. FIDH and ODHIKAR hope that the Working Group will not miss this opportunity to make recommendations enabling multinationals and states (both the state of Bangladesh and multinationals’ home states), to fulfill their respective responsibilities to ensure respect for human rights, put an end to abuses, and improve access to remedies for victims. FIDH and ODHIKAR believe that analysis of the situation in Bangladesh would further enable the Working Group to draw lessons that could be applicable to human rights abuses in other global supply chains.

FIDH and ODHIKAR hope finally that the Working Group will engage with all affected groups, including workers – women workers in particular – as well as trade unions, relevant authorities, the International Labour Organization, garment sector federations, and businesses sourcing from Bangladesh.

26. China Labor Watch factory investigations and expansion of worker hotline

*China Labor Watch* (CLW) is a non-profit NGO that seeks to strengthen respect for labour rights in China. In working toward this goal, CLW will complete three investigative reports and expand its worker hotline in the next half year.

In November 2012, CLW published a four-factory investigation on Chinese factories producing toys for Mattel. CLW will keep the pressure on this year by completing a six-factory investigation on Mattel’s toy factories in August.

CLW is currently in the process of editing a short film on Samsung factories and supplier factories, including interviews with 30 workers in these factories. CLW will also continue to cooperate with human rights groups in France to support their lawsuit against Samsung.

In addition to more Foxconn factory investigations, CLW will also focus on other Apple product supplier plants in China, such as Pegatron and Green Point. The proportion of Apple products being manufactured in these factories will rise this year, and we will compare the labour conditions at these factories to those of Foxconn.
plants. Has Apple been putting pressure on its other suppliers to improve conditions? Or are these conditions worse?

The CLW-supported hotline in China has already carried out 72 events promoting the hotline in Chinese factories, distributing hotline information to production workers, giving them a route to solve grievances. By the end of the year, CLW will have completed 110 factory events promoting the hotline. Since its inception, the CLW hotline has handled 3000 cases.

→ Contributed by Qiang Li, China Labor Watch, liqiangnyc (at) gmail.com

27. Vicky Bowman appointed to lead Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

The Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) and the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) are delighted to announce the appointment of Vicky Bowman as Director of the new Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business. Ms Bowman brings to this role a vast experience of Myanmar, international relations, and business. A former British diplomat fluent in Burmese, Ms Bowman has worked most recently at Rio Tinto where amongst other responsibilities, she led the implementation of the company’s commitment to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. She will take up her appointment in Myanmar in late July 2013. Click here for the full announcement.

The Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business is currently being established in Yangon with support from a range of stakeholders to promote responsible business conduct in Myanmar. The long-term goal for the new Centre is to become an independent and self-sustaining entity that will provide a platform for businesses, civil society, academics, and governments – local and international – to meet and exchange ideas and build capacities regarding responsible investment and responsible business practices in Myanmar.

→ Contributed by Scott Jerbi, Institute for Human Rights and Business, scott.jerbi (at) ihrb.org

28. Political forums on land & environment prior to Cambodian national election - Mondulkiri, 14 Jun

On 14 June, the NGO Forum on Cambodia, Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), COMFREL (Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia) and CCFC will organise a “Political Party Forum on Land and Environment” in Mondulkiri, Cambodia. The event in Mondulkiri is part of a series of political forums and a follow-up on the national political forum on 6 June in Phnom Penh and the provincial forum in Sihanoukville on 31 May.

The focus will be on the policies of individual political parties and how they will enact these following the election. In Phnom Penh, political representatives were asked to comment on policies on economic and land reform; the environment, forestry and climate change; social and human development; rule of law, good governance and access to information; and other issues. The event in Mondulkiri will focus on natural resource management, specifically of land and environment, including the state’s responsibility to regulate private business operations that have an impact on human rights. Of great concern to NGOs and the public in Cambodia is the awarding of economic land concessions to private companies within an inadequate framework of protection for individuals and communities, who may be evicted from land as a result. It is critical for government regulations to be explicit and closely followed in this area.

NGOs hosting this event include NGO Forum on Cambodia, COMFREL, Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, Gender and Development for Cambodia, Silaka, CCHR, DPA, Voice of Democracy, Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency, Advocacy & Policy Institute, Committee to Promote Women in Politics, and Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee.

→ Contributed by Christoph Oldenburg, NGO Forum on Cambodia, christoph (at) ngoforum.org.kh

29. John Ruggie to visit Indonesia & Singapore - 11-14 Jun

Professor John Ruggie, author of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and currently chair of Shift, will visit Jakarta, Indonesia and Singapore from 11-14 June. Professor Ruggie’s visit coincides with the third in a series of consultative meetings in respect of the Mazars-Shift project to develop a dual set of standards for auditing companies in line with the UN Guiding Principles.

Together with the Human Rights Resource Centre for ASEAN, its primary research and outreach partner, the project is striving to take the next step in putting the Guiding Principles into practice. Professor Ruggie’s visit
emphasises the commitment to consulting government in its broadest sense, business, and society at large as represented by influential national and international groups.

While his visit affords an opportunity for a meeting of the Eminent Persons Group tasked with keeping the project on course, Professor Ruggie will also deliver lectures at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore on 11 June and at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jakarta the following afternoon.

→ Contributed by Steve Crewe, Mazars, steve.crewe (at) mazars.co.id

30. Social Resources Institute will research the lives of agricultural workers

In June, Social Resources Institute will launch research on the current situations of the lives of agricultural workers. This project is sponsored by Asian Legal Resources Centre, and aims to get the media, NGOs, government and the public to begin to pay attention to this group.

Agricultural workers are employed by farmers or corporations to plant or process agricultural produce. Their work is typically temporary and they tend to be highly mobile. In China, people always discuss the lives of migrant workers but do not care about agricultural workers. The latter are key to keeping agricultural production safe and sufficient for China’s needs. However, current laws and policies, including the Labour Law, do not sufficiently protect them. They are not covered by China’s medical, education and occupational disease treatment systems.

SRI will use methods including literature review, field research and interviews to produce a report titled “Agriculture Workers’ Mobility and Current Life Situations: Research in the Chain of Agricultural Production”, to be published in September.

→ Contributed by Feifei Cai, Assistant Researcher, Social Resources Institute, ff.cai (at) srchina.org

31. Forthcoming resource guide: “Creating Inclusive Workplaces for LGBT Employees in China”

Without formal recognition in the workplace and community and without adequate legal protections in the form of equal opportunity legislation, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) population in China faces inequalities and discrimination on many fronts. There is enormous scope for the corporate sector to drive positive change in this area.

With sponsorship from Goldman Sachs and IBM, Community Business is producing a resource guide to help companies create inclusive workplaces for LGBT employees in China. In addition to showcasing best practice, this guide will provide a set of recommendations on what companies can do.

To ensure that the recommendations are both realistic and appropriate to the Chinese context, Community Business cordially invites companies to take part in a corporate stakeholder engagement session to discuss what companies in China can do to create inclusive workplaces for LGBT employees:

Shanghai Session – Monday, 17 June 2013
Beijing Session – Wednesday, 19 June 2013

Community Business will be launching the Resource Guide in Beijing and Shanghai in September (exact date to be confirmed). Please contact Amanda Yik (amanda.yik (at) communitybusiness.org) if you would like to join the launch event.

→ Contributed by Kevin Burns, Community Business, kevin.burns (at) communitybusiness.org

32. Country Sensitisation Workshops on ASEAN - Yangon, Myanmar, 25-26 Jun

The South East Asian Committee for Advocacy (SEACA) is bringing its Country Sensitisation Workshops on ASEAN to Myanmar this June. These workshops aim to familiarise participants with ASEAN and its history; vital ASEAN documents such as the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN Blueprints of Cooperation, ASEAN Human Rights Declaration; and ASEAN bodies and mechanisms such as the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and the ASEAN Commission on Women and Children. Working in partnership with the Human Rights Education Institute of Burma and the Myanmar People Forum, the first in the series of the ASEAN Workshops will be held on 25-26 June in Yangon, Myanmar.

Complementing the civil society workshops on ASEAN are the Thematic Issue Briefings, a four-part series of briefings on various emerging issues in ASEAN that we are organising in Myanmar this year. First on the list is
33. E-learning initiative for young migrant workers in China

ICO’s Institute for Social Agenda was awarded a grant from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) in December 2012, to support its project “Empowering Vulnerable People through Internet: E-Learning Initiative for Young Migrant Workers in China”. The two-year project will include face-to-face training of more than 1000 young migrant workers in over 30 migrant communities. The contents include not only awareness campaigns to change their living conditions or develop their human/social capital, but also workshops to promote workers’ online/offline social interaction skills and legal knowledge as well as to develop their sense of citizenship.

The project will be implemented in the Pearl River Delta and Yangtze River Delta where more than 50 million young migrants work and live. The project’s implementing partners are two universities, one in each target area: Shenzhen Polytechnic College, and Nanjing University of Finance and Economics. 10 civil society organizations will also join to create the supporting mechanisms for young migrant workers.

The first training workshop was successfully conducted in Suzhou in May. At the end of the workshops, workers all expressed their eagerness to participate in the next gathering.

→ Contributed by Joy Lin, Institute of Contemporary Observation, joy.lin (at) ico-china.org

34. Beijing Aizhixing Institute to work with companies to support children affected by HIV/AIDS

In 2013-2015, Beijing Aizhixing Institute aims to promote complete implementation of Chinese government policies on the welfare and rights of children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. Aizhixing will seek government disclosure of relevant policies and budgets; educate affected communities on policy, law and human rights; and take legal action to promote government transparency and implementation of policies relating to children affected by HIV/AIDS. The project will also communicate with corporations to promote social responsibility and support their work for children affected by HIV/AIDS.

→ Contributed by Wan Yanhai, Beijing Aizhixing Institute, wanyanhai2010 (at) hotmail.com

35. LGBT Workplace Diversity Workshop - Shanghai, 16 Jun

Aibai Shanghai will co-organise an LGBT workplace diversity workshop with Shanghai Pride and Community Business on 16 June during Gay Pride Month. Diversity managers from IBM, Goldman Sachs, etc. will be invited to share their best practice of business cases; dozens of domestic enterprises and NGOs will also be invited to attend the panel discussion. Aibai Shanghai hopes that, through this workshop, Chinese enterprises can pay more attention to workplace diversity/LGBT issues and take steps towards building inclusive and diverse working environments for their LGBT employees as well as adopting non-discrimination policies. Other advocacy activities will also be organised in Shanghai during Pride Month by NGOs; if you want to know more, please contact us at: contact (at) aibai.org.

→ Contributed by Jacob Huang, Aibai, contact (at) aibai.org

36. AIDS & regional public policy advocacy seminar series in China

[Unofficial translation by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre from Chinese original]

On 25 May 2013, Heerbutong Center AIBO AIDS Relief held its first event of the “AIDS & regional public policy advocacy seminar series” in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. The event called on health departments, education departments, and other departments of each province to review the existing regulations related to the issue, to ensure that these regulations do not contain clauses that restrict the employment of people infected with AIDS as teachers and in other professions. We also hope to further prompt the State Council Legislative Affairs Department to further review the “Standards for the recruitment of civil servants”. Removing the substandard clauses would be very important.
In the following months, Heerbutong Center AIBO AIDS Relief will hold seminars of a similar nature in different locations in mainland China, in order to help prevent future employment discrimination against people with HIV/AIDS. Heerbutong Center AIBO AIDS Relief operates a free-of-charge law consultation hotline: 400-0599-121, with professional lawyers and community experts providing services in the areas of law, therapy, counselling etc. for those affected by AIDS, as well as mediating disputes and advocating laws and policies related to prevention and treatment of AIDS in China.

→ Contributed by Kun Chang, Heerbutong Center AIBO AIDS Relief, changkun2010 (at) gmail.com

Evaluation of reports by US companies on their human rights commitments & performance in Myanmar

See item 21 above, in the Americas section. We include reference to these planned activities here in the Asia/Pacific section because they relate specifically to Myanmar.

Chinese environmental protests in the age of the internet - London, 13 Jun

See item 41 below, in the Europe/Central Asia section. We include reference to this event here in the Asia/Pacific section because it relates specifically to China.

European/Central Asia

37. Human Rights and Business Conference - Amsterdam, 13 June

The importance of integrating human rights into both policy and practical operations of companies and investors is increasing. On Thursday 13 June from 10:00-18:00, the VBDO, CNV Internationaal, ICCO and PwC are hosting a multi-stakeholder conference geared towards putting human rights and business developments into concrete practice for companies and investors.

Different stakeholders are sharing their experience on the relationship between business and human rights, providing various perspectives including those of company, government, investor and civil society. Lilianne Ploumen (Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs) is opening the conference. The official opening is followed by the keynote speaker, Allan Lerberg Jørgensen (Director of Human Rights and Business Department, Danish Institute for Human Rights).

During the afternoon, several breakout sessions will be provided on the topics of: traceability in the supply chain; company policy into practice; innovative approaches beyond certification; living wage; complaint mechanisms & remedies; and human rights and business in Myanmar.

Entrance fee is €69. First come, first served. Deadline for registration: 6 June, http://www.vbdo.nl/en/event-inschrijven or contact Saskia Verbunt, VBDO at saskia.verbunt (at) vbdo.nl.

→ Contributed by Dylan Tromp, Danish Institute for Human Rights, dtr (at) humanrights.dk

38. Introductory Workshop on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights - London, 12 Jul

When: 12 July 2013 9:00-17:30
Venue: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1PL
Cost: from £250

While not creating hard legal obligations, the discourse around the UN Guiding Principles and how they are best implemented by business is heating up. It is arguable that law firms themselves will be required to “know and show” they are respecting human rights especially in their role as trusted advisors to business. Equally the legal liability for businesses in relation to human rights is crystallising, and advising clients on human rights is a growing area for lawyers’ business.

The Law Society is running a one-day introductory workshop for members on the Guiding Principles. The workshop will be facilitated by Shift, which works with a range of governments, businesses and leading law firms helping them implement the Guiding Principles.

Participants in the introductory workshop will gain an increased understanding of the Guiding Principles, their relationship to existing law (national and international) and how they apply to the legal profession.
To book your place: https://events.lawsociety.org.uk/ClientApps/Silverbear.Web.EDMS/public/default.aspx?tabId=37&id=230&orgId=1&guid=6be75b05-890a-4fad-aa72-567858b5d044


39. European Commission’s Human Rights Sector Guides - due out in mid-June

In mid-June, the European Commission will publish Guides to Implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights for three industry sectors. The Guides – for employment & recruitment agencies, oil & gas companies, and companies in the information & communications technology sector – were developed over the past year by the Institute for Human Rights & Business (IHRB) and Shift through extensive research and multi-stakeholder consultation with representatives from the industries as well as government, trade unions, civil society, and academics and other experts.


→ Contributed by Neill Wilkins, Programme Support Manager – Migration, IHRB, neill.wilkins (at) institutehrb.org

40. “Measuring the Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights” expert meeting - UK, 7 Oct

On Monday 7 October, the Cumberland Lodge (Windsor, UK) is hosting an expert meeting on “Measuring the Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights”. The colloquium is structured as an expert meeting. The Organising Committee will lead a research team in charge of drafting a report on business and human rights indicators. The draft report will be presented at the colloquium, where experts will give targeted feedback and offer practical suggestions for potential modifications. The report will then be refined by the Organising Committee and the final version will be presented at the UN Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights (Geneva, 2-4 December).

Anybody interested in joining the research team is invited to submit a short statement and a bio using this online form by Monday 17 June. Further enquiries should be directed to: business-humanrights (at) cumberlandlodge.ac.uk.

For more information, please visit the event’s website: http://www.cumberlandlodge.ac.uk/programme/Forthcoming+Events/Business+and+Human+Rights

→ Contributed by Damiano De Felice (LSE), Ann Sofie Cloots (Cambridge University), Charline Daelman (University of Leuven) & Irene Pietropaoli (Middlesex University), business-humanrights (at) cumberlandlodge.ac.uk

41. Chinese environmental protests in the age of the internet - London, 13 Jun

In recent years, Chinese cities have seen large protests about environmental problems. Pollution may now become the nation’s single greatest cause of social unrest. What can this tell us about how China is changing? chinadialogue and the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy at London’s School of Oriental Studies will host a public event on 13 June at 13:00-14:00 about recent environmental protests in China and what these might tell us about the country’s changing public sphere, particularly in the age of social media and the internet.

The panel discussion will feature Hu Yong, professor at Peking University and a prominent media commentator; Guobin Yang, professor of communications and sociology at University of Pennsylvania and author of The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online; and Liu Jianqiang, an award-winning investigative journalist and Beijing editor of chinadialogue.

The event is free, but spaces are limited. Please ensure you register here: http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/event/6884278061

chinadialogue.net is a bilingual website dedicated to open discussion on all environmental issues, with a special focus on China.

→ Contributed by Sam Geall, Executive Editor, chinadialogue.net, sam.geall (at) chinadialogue.net
42. Fund-raising for victims of Bhopal disaster: Run the British 10K London, 14 Jul

The Bhopal Medical Appeal is a charity that helps alleviate the suffering of the tens of thousands of people maimed by exposure to toxins released from the former pesticides factory that exploded in Bhopal, India, in 1984. They have places in the British 10K London run which is set to take place on Sunday 14 July. Runners should aim to raise £250 in sponsorship. Bhopal Medical Appeal pays entry fees and, after the run, treats everybody to a cold beer and curry picnic in Hyde Park. More information is available on their website.

→ Contributed by Dr. Nadia Bernaz, Programme Leader (MA Human Rights & Business), Middlesex University School of Law, n.bernaz (at) mdx.ac.uk

43. Register now for 2013 European Pro Bono Forum - Warsaw, 24-25 Oct

PILnet: The Global Network for Public Interest Law is pleased to announce that registration for the 2013 European Pro Bono Forum – to take place on 24-25 October, in Warsaw, Poland – is now open. The Forum, currently in its seventh year, has played a major role in building support for pro bono across the continent and around the globe. By bringing together a growing community that recognises the urgency of providing pro bono services – leading figures from law firms, corporations, bar organisations, NGOs, and law schools – the event offers a vital setting where participants can explore how they can most effectively collaborate to address critical issues of social justice. Through interactive workshops, engaging social events, and structured networking opportunities, attendees gain insight into the pro bono community and forge alliances that can help deliver justice and protect rights around the world.

This year’s gathering will offer meaningful opportunities for pro bono practitioners to delve into new initiatives related to women’s rights, the threat to civil liberties in Europe, corporate engagement, clinical legal education, strategic litigation, and cross-border partnerships, among others. A series of workshops entitled “The Pro Bono Lab” will introduce ways in which existing programs can boost their impact, whether through novel collaborations or by harnessing technology to expand their reach. The winners of PILnet’s European Pro Bono Awards will also be announced at the Forum. (A nominations call for the awards will soon be released.)

For more details and to register, visit www.probonoforum.eu.

→ Contributed by Lorna Kralik, Communications/Legal Officer, PILnet, lkralik (at) pilnet.org

44. Event on corporate responsibility for sexual exploitation - Visby, Sweden, 3 Jul

Did you know that companies contribute to sexual exploitation and sex trade around the world? One third of all Swedes’ sex purchases abroad takes place while on business travel. The Swedish Women’s Lobby has initiated a project to help companies take action against sexual exploitation by introducing codes of conduct against sex purchases, strip club visits and escort services. By introducing these measures, companies show that they take responsibility for human rights and gender equality. The moral compass should be the same – regardless of where in the world the employee travels.

The Swedish Women’s Lobby has organised an event to present this initiative and showcase best practices by companies that have engaged in Corporate Sexual Responsibility: “None of your business? – Corporate responsibility against sex purchase”.

Date & place: Wednesday 3 July, Kinbergs Plats 8, Visby, Sweden

→ Contributed by Stephanie Thögersen, Swedish Women’s Lobby, stephanie.thogersen (at) sverigeskvinnolobby.se

Inaugural Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct - Paris, 26-27 Jun

See item 2 above, in the International section. We include reference to this event here in the Europe/Central Asia section because it takes place in Paris.

Forthcoming events organised by Essex Business and Human Rights Project

See parts a-b of item 6 above, in the International section. We include reference to these events here in the Europe/Central Asia section because they take place in London.
Event on how business & civil society can tackle child poverty & social exclusion - Brussels, 13 Jun

See item 7 above, in the International section. We include reference to this event here in the Europe/Central Asia section because it takes place in Brussels.

Invitation to register for the Zermatt Summit - Switzerland, 20-21 Jun

See item 9 above, in the International section. We include reference to this event here in the Europe/Central Asia section because it takes place in Switzerland.

Middle East/North Africa

45. Conference: “Corporate Social Responsibility in the Arab World” - Istanbul, 19-20 Jun

On 19-20 June, The Protection Project at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies will host the first regional conference on corporate social responsibility, titled: “Corporate Social Responsibility in the Middle East” in Istanbul, Turkey. This conference will bring together business representatives, law professors, and representatives from NGOs and other elements of civil society to discuss socially responsible business practices and corporate compliance in the Middle East & North Africa region with respect to the UN Global Compact, and other relevant international and national standards on human rights, labour rights, anti-corruption policies, and fair business practices.

The conference will examine a wide array of issues related to CSR in the Arab World, including global governance and corporate liability, self-regulations and voluntary compliance, the role of governments in business, illicit business practices, and the future of CSR and responsible investment in the Arab World. More information and registration details here.

→ Contributed by Elaine Panter, Director of Programs and Planning, The Projection Project, epanter2 (at) jhu.edu

46. Campaign to enforce law on elimination of violence against women in Afghanistan

Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) initiated a lobbying campaign for enforcement of a law on the elimination of violence against women in Afghanistan, which was adopted by a presidential decree in 2009. The Commission will carry out activities until the end of June to promote awareness and enforce the law in the public and private sectors in Afghanistan. The campaign includes lobbying events and reports on discrimination against women in the workplace, private and public. The reports will also study rape and honour killings and all forms of violent discrimination against women.

→ Contributed by Sima Samar, Chairperson, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), aihrc (at) aihrc.org.af

47. Arabia CSR Awards 2013 - deadline 30 Jun

The Arabia CSR Awards honour and showcase those companies that demonstrate a clear vision, strategy and implementation of CSR and good business ethics. Every year, the Arabia CSR Awards screen hundreds of applying companies, their sustainability reports and their applications to be a part of the sustainability journey in the Arab region. The deadline for companies to apply for this year’s awards is 30 June. For more details, please contact Youshey Zakluddin, admin (at) arabiacsrnetwork.com.

In the past five cycles of the Awards, nearly 400 applications have been received from 13 countries across the Arab world. Past winners have included Dubai Customs, Health Authority Abu Dhabi, Coca Cola Jordan, Standard Chartered Bank ME, Vodafone Qatar and more.

The Awards are co-ordinated by Arabia CSR Network. Based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, it is one of the very first multi-stakeholder platforms that engage small and large businesses and government institutions to strengthen their commitment to sustainable development across the Arab world.

→ Contributed by Youshey Zakluddin, Projects Manager, Arabia CSR Network
48. Foro Regional de América Latina y el Caribe sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos - 2013

El Grupo de Trabajo de las Naciones Unidas sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos, la Dirección Regional para América Latina y el Caribe (PNUD) y el Gobierno de Colombia se complacen en anunciar la organización conjunta del Primer Foro Regional de América Latina y el Caribe sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos que se realizará en Medellín, Colombia del 28 al 30 de agosto de 2013.

El foro proporciona una plataforma regional multi-actor con el objetivo de fomentar un diálogo constructivo con respecto a la implementación de los Principios Rectores sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas. Este evento congregará a representantes globales, regionales y locales de empresas, asociaciones industriales, gobiernos, organismos internacionales y regionales, sociedad civil, instituciones nacionales de derechos humanos, sindicatos y otros actores.

Los objetivos específicos del foro consistirán en proporcionar oportunidades de capacitación para actores involucrados en la implementación de los Principios Rectores y la sociedad civil, identificar temas prioritarios sobre empresas y derechos humanos en la región, así como también prácticas innovadoras en el manejo de impactos de empresas, que permitan un desarrollo equitativo con un enfoque de derechos humanos. Los resultados de este ejercicio se llevarán al Foro Global sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos que se realizará en Ginebra del 2 al 4 de diciembre de 2013.

Los organizadores invitan a los actores relevantes a involucrarse en la preparación del evento y en la difusión de la convocatoria para garantizar una participación amplia y equilibrada en América Latina y el Caribe. La participación está sujeta a limitaciones de espacio (350 personas aproximadamente). La inscripción se realizará en línea y se abrirá a partir del lunes 3 de junio. Para consultas, por favor contactar a regionalforumbhr (at) ohchr.org o maria.eugenia.boza (at) undp.org.

→ Contribución de: Secretariado (Foros Regionales sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos), Grupo de Trabajo de las Naciones Unidas sobre las empresas y los derechos humanos, regionalforumbhr (at) ohchr.org

49. Argentina: Nuevo libro sobre complicidad corporativa – “Cuentas pendientes. Los cómplices económicos de la dictadura”

Hasta hoy la justicia argentina tuvo el mérito de investigar sistemáticamente los delitos de sangre cometidos durante la última dictadura, pero dejó aluera los factores económicos que la facilitaron. Horacio Verbitsky y Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky compilan este libro colectivo sacando a la luz los casos de complicidad civil y económica con la dictadura, desde Ledesma, Mercedes Benz, Ford, bancos financistas, Papel Prensa, el diario La Nueva Provincia, el pillaje económico, los abogados, las organizaciones empresariales, los aspectos macroeconómicos e internacionales, hasta los intelectuales, entre otros. También se abordan cuestiones teóricas sobre la justicia transicional y la responsabilidad de los sujetos no estatales por complicidad.

Especialistas como Naomi Roht-Arriaza, Leonardo Filippini, Eduardo Basualdo, Claudio Tognonato, Victoria Basualdo, Federico Delgado, Damián Loreti, Tomás Ojea Quintana, Mario Rapoport, Alfredo Callegano, Jorge Taiana, Héctor Recalde, entre otros, contribuyen con sus aportes teóricos y empíricos a la memoria, la reparación y la prevención, y sobre todo, a crear una narrativa más completa de los años del “Proceso”. La publicación de este libro está a cargo de Siglo Veintiuno Editores en Buenos Aires (como se puede ver en su catálogo acá) y se espera su lanzamiento para septiembre de este año.

→ Para mayor información, contactar a Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky en juanpablobohos (at) gmail.com

50. Grupo de Trabajo de la ONU sobre las empresas y los derechos humanos considerará la comunicación de FIDH sobre Bangladesh

Tras la tragedia en el edificio Rana Plaza el pasado abril, FIDH y su organización miembro en Bangladesh, ODHIKAR, han solicitado formalmente a las Naciones Unidas que aclaren las responsabilidades de los diferentes actores implicados en las violaciones de derechos humanos en el sector textil en Bangladesh. Estas organizaciones han solicitado que el Grupo de Trabajo de Empresas y Derechos Humanos de la ONU realice una visita al país y analice las condiciones y los derechos laborales de los trabajadores en el sector textil en Bangladesh. El Grupo de Trabajo examinara la cuestión durante su próxima reunión, entre el 17 y el 21 de junio.
El sector textil en Bangladesh es particularmente emblemático de las violaciones de derechos humanos en las cadenas de suministro, ilustrando una tendencia que ya viene de tiempo atrás, de abusos asociados a las actividades empresariales, así como la ineficiencia de las diferentes iniciativas adoptadas hasta ahora. FIDH y ODHIKAR esperan que el Grupo de Trabajo no deje pasar esta oportunidad para hacer recomendaciones que permitan a las multinacionales que compran productos en Bangladesh, a los estados (tanto al estado de Bangladesh como a los estados de origen de las multinacionales), cumplir con sus responsabilidades respectivas, asegurar el respeto de los derechos humanos en Bangladesh, poner fin a los abusos y mejorar el acceso a reparación para las víctimas. Asimismo, FIDH y ODHIKAR creen que el análisis de la situación en Bangladesh permitirá al Grupo de Trabajo aprender lecciones aplicables a otras cadenas de suministro.

FIDH y ODHIKAR esperan finalmente que el Grupo de Trabajo colabore con todos los grupos afectados, incluyendo los trabajadores, y especialmente las trabajadoras, los sindicatos, las autoridades relevantes, la Organización Mundial del Trabajo (OMT), les federaciones del sector textil y las multinacionales que se proveen en Bangladesh.

→ Contribución de: Pia Navazo, FIDH, pnavazo (at) fidh.org

51. El CIEDH nombra a su nuevo Director Ejecutivo: Phil Bloomer

Phil Bloomer ha sido nombrado el nuevo Director Ejecutivo del Centro de Información sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos (CIEDH); comenzará su trabajo el 1 de septiembre cuando el actual Director Chris Avery se retira. Phil cuenta con 30 años de experiencias en derechos humanos y justicia social, incluyendo posiciones de liderazgo en Oxfam GB desde 1995 – en su última posición, Phil fue Director de la división de campañas y políticas – y 11 años de experiencia en Latinoamérica y el Caribe trabajando en el ámbito de los derechos humanos y la justicia económica. Haga clic aquí para leer el texto completo del anuncio (en inglés).

→ Contribuido por el personal del CIEDH, contact (at) business-humanrights.org

52. Boletín trimestral del CIEDH sobre responsabilidad legal empresarial – futuros números estarán disponibles en inglés, español y francés

En los próximos meses el Centro de Información sobre Empresas y Derechos Humanos (CIEDH) publicará su Boletín Trimestral sobre Responsabilidad Legal Empresarial en español y francés, además de la edición inglesa. Este boletín informa a todas las personas interesadas en la responsabilidad legal empresarial al destacar: principales acontecimientos en éste campo; nuevos perfiles de casos (demandas judiciales) en nuestro Portal sobre Responsabilidad Legal Empresarial; actualizaciones de perfiles de casos existentes; y otras novedades.

Si desea recibir el boletín en uno de estos idiomas, no dude en contactarnos.

→ Contribuido por el CIEDH: Sif Thorgeirsson, gerente del proyecto “Responsabilidad Legal Empresarial”, thorgeirsson (at) business-humanrights.org, y Elodie Aba, investigadora legal, aba (at) business-humanrights.org

Français

53. Le groupe de travail de l’ONU sur les entreprises & les droits de l'homme examinera les informations soumises par la FIDH au sujet du Bangladesh


Le secteur textile au Bangladesh est particulièrement représentatif des violations des droits de l'homme dans les chaînes d’approvisionnement globales, illustrant une tendance déjà bien longue, des abus liés aux activités des entreprises ainsi que l’inefficacité des différentes initiatives prises jusqu’à présent. FIDH et ODHIKAR espèrent que le Groupe de Travail ne laissera pas passer l'opportunité d’élaborer des recommandations. Celles-ci permettraient aux multinationales s'approvisionnant au Bangladesh et aux états (tand le Bangladesh comme les États d’origine des multinationales) de s’acquitter de leurs responsabilités afin de assurer le respect des droits de l'homme au Bangladesh, de mettre fin à leurs violations et d’améliorer l’accès à la réparation pour les victimes. La FIDH et ODHIKAR croient que l’analyse de la situation au Bangladesh servira au Groupe de Travail à en tirer des leçons applicables aux différentes chaînes d’approvisionnement.
La FIDH et ODHIKAR espèrent finalement que le Groupe de Travail collaborera avec tous les groupes affectés, y compris les travailleurs et en particulier les travailleuses, ainsi que les syndicats, les autorités, l’Organisation Internationale du Travail, les fédérations du secteur textile et les multinationales s’approvisionnant au Bangladesh.

→ Contribution de Pia Navazo, FIDH, pnavazo (at) fidh.org

54. Le Centre de Ressources nomme un nouveau Directeur : Phil Bloomer


→ Contribution du Centre de Ressources sur les Entreprises & les Droits de l’Homme, contact (at) business-humanrights.org

55. Bulletin trimestriel sur la responsabilité juridique des entreprises - futurs numéros disponibles en français

Dans les mois qui viennent, le Centre de Ressources publiera son bulletin trimestriel (Corporate Legal Accountability Quarterly Bulletin) en français, ainsi qu’en anglais et en espagnol. L’objectif de ce bulletin est d’aider tous ceux qui suivent les questions relatives à la responsabilité juridique des entreprises, et de mettre en exergue les développements clés, les profils d’actions en justice ajoutés à notre Portail sur la Responsabilité Juridique des Entreprises (Corporate Legal Accountability Portal), ceux qui ont été mis à jour, ainsi que d’autres nouvelles.

Merci de nous contacter si vous souhaitez recevoir le bulletin, en précisant la langue dans laquelle vous souhaitez le recevoir.

→ Contribution du Centre de Ressources sur les Entreprises & les Droits de l’Homme : Sífr Thorgeirsson, Manager, Projet sur la Responsabilité Juridique des Entreprises, thorgeirsson (at) business-humanrights.org et Elodie Aba, Chercheur juridique, aba (at) business-humanrights.org

العربية

56. مركز موارد الأعمال وحقوق الإنسان يعين مديرًا تنفيذيًا جديدًا: فيل بلومر

تم تعيين السيد فيل بلومر مديرًا تنفيذيًا جديدًا لمركز موارد الأعمال وحقوق الإنسان، ليبدأ عمله في الأول من سبتمبر - أيلول 2013 عندما يبلغ العمر الحالي 30 عامًا من الخبرة في مجال حقوق الإنسان والعمل الاجتماعي. وقد شغل منصب قائد في منظمة أوكسفام برطانيا منذ عام 1995 - وكان آخرها مدير شعبة السياسات والحملات - منها 11 عامًا من العمل في أمريكا اللاتينية ومنطقة البحر الكاريبي في قضايا حقوق الإنسان والعمل الاقتصادي. إنها إحدى النجوم في العديد من الأفلام والمسلسلات التي تتناول حقوق الإنسان والمدرسة الاقتصادية.

. contact (at) business-humanrights.org

للحصول على الإعلان الكامل تعيين فيل باللغة الإنجليزية

中文

57. 中国青年外来工互联网教育

2012年12月，艾珂社会议程研究所“通过互联网对弱势群体赋权：中国青年外来工互联网教育”项目得到联合国民主基金会第六轮资助。此为期两年的项目将在珠三角的30多个外来工社区对1000多名年轻工人进行面对面培训，唤醒其改变命运和未来人权资本及社会资本的意识，增强使用网络和社交媒体的能力，提升其法律知识和公民意识。

→ 信息由艾珂社会议程研究所Joy Lin 提供, joy.lin (at) ico-china.org
58. 中国：北京爱知行研究所推动企业参与支持受艾滋病影响儿童的工作

北京爱知行研究所2013-2015年将着重推动中国政府全面落实保障感染艾滋病儿童和受艾滋病影响儿童的福利保障政策和权益。爱知行将申请政府财政信息公开，对艾滋病感染者进行法律人权教育，采取法律行动，推动政府透明和政策落实。同时，项目积极联络企业，推动企业参与支持受艾滋病影响儿童的工作。项目每年需要5万美金预算。

→信息由北京爱知行研究所万延海提供，wanyanhai2010 (at) hotmail.com

59. LGBT多元化工作坊 - 上海6月16日

爱白文化教育中心上海小组将在6月16日-同志骄傲月期间与上海骄傲节，社商贤汇等NGO联合举办一场企业LGBT多元化工作坊，来自IBM、高盛等企业多元化部门或项目的高管人员将受邀分享其商业成功案例，国内部分企业与NGO代表也将受邀出席并参与讨论，爱白上海希望透过此次活动能引起本土企业对LGBT员工的重视，为中国职场中的LGBT人士创造一个包容多元的工作环境。骄傲节期间，上海各NGO还会组织一系列的倡导活动。如果您希望了解更多，请联系我们：contact (at) aibai.org

→信息由爱白文化教育中心Jacob Huang, contact (at) aibai.org提供

60. 艾滋病和地方公共政策倡导系列研讨会将在中国大陆举行

2013年5月25日，Heerbutong Center AIBO AIDS Relief率先在广东省广州市举办《艾滋病和地方公共政策倡导系列研讨会》，呼吁各省卫生厅教育厅等部门审阅现行的相关法规，确保这些法规没有限制艾滋病感染者成为教师或其他职业的规定。更希望进一步推动国务院法制办审查《公务员录用体检通用标准(试行)》，删除其中的“艾滋病不合格条款”有重大意义。

随后数月，Heerbutong Center AIBO AIDS Relief将在中国大陆陆续举办类似研讨会，以未来消除受艾滋病感染者就业歧视状况。Heerbutong Center AIBO AIDS Relief开设有免费法律咨询热线400-0599-121，专业律师和社群专家为受艾滋病影响人群提供法律、治疗和心理辅导等服务，协调缓和矛盾，同时推动中国艾滋病防治事业的法治建设和保障。

→信息由和而不同中心艾博公益常坤提供，changkun2010 (a)t) gmail.com

61. 企业与人权资源中心任命新任执行总监菲尔·布卢默(Phil Bloomer)

菲尔·布卢默被任命为企业与人权资源中心新任执行总监，他将于9月1日开始工作，而现任总监克里斯·艾弗里(Chris Avery)将开始退休。菲尔带来他在人权和社会公义领域的30多年经验，这包括他在英国乐施会自1995年以来的领导职务（最近担当活动及政策部主管）以及在拉丁美洲和加勒比地区11年的人权和经济公义领域的经验。点击此处参见菲尔的任命公告全文。

→信息由企业与人权资源中心工作人员提供, contact (at) business-humanrights.org

Português

62. Centro de Informação nomeia novo Diretor Executivo: Phil Bloomer

Phil Bloomer foi nomeado o novo Diretor Executivo do Centro de Informação sobre Empresas e Direitos Humanos, que assumirá o cargo a partir de 1º de setembro deste ano, quando o atual diretor, Chris Avery, se aposentará. Phil tem mais de 30 anos de experiência em direitos humanos e justiça social. Isto inclui cargos de liderança na Oxfam Grã-Bretanha desde 1995, onde recentemente foi diretor de Política e Campanhas; e mais de 11 anos de trabalho na América Latina e no Caribe com direitos humanos e justiça econômica. Clique aqui para ver o anúncio completo da nomeação de Phil.

→ Contribuição da equipe do Centro de Informação sobre Empresas e Direitos Humanos, contact (at) business-humanrights.org
63. Ресурсный центр назначает Фила Блумера новым Исполнительным директором

Фил Блумер был назначен на должность Исполнительного директора Ресурсного центра по вопросам бизнеса и прав человека. Он приступит к своим обязанностям 1 сентября, после ухода в отставку теперешнего директора Криса Эйвери. Брюс приносит с собой тридцатилетний опыт работы в области прав человека и социальной справедливости. Это включает руководящие должности в Oxfam GB с 1995 года, такие как Директор отдела кампаний и стратегий, а также одиннадцатилетний опыт работы в Латинской Америке и Карибском бассейне в области прав человека и экономической справедливости.

Здесь Вы можете ознакомиться с полным текстом объявления о назначении Фила.

→ Предоставлено сотрудниками Ресурсного центра по вопросам бизнеса и прав человека, contact (at) business-humanrights.org

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