

# Investor statement in support of the Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights

**May 2011**

The undersigned investors express their support for the Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights, published by the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative on Business and Human Rights, Professor John Ruggie.

This statement is signed by 29 investors – both asset owners and asset managers – that collectively represent over US\$ 2.7 trillion assets under management. All of the undersigned investors are signatories of the United Nations-backed Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI). This group of global investors recognises that environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues may affect the performance of investment portfolios.

We support the Protect, Respect, and Remedy Framework and the Guiding Principles developed to implement the Framework, both of which have been devised through a multi-stakeholder consultation that has included the participation of the investment community. We understand the difficulties of reaching agreement within the UN system, and see the Guiding Principles as an important step towards more clarity on responsibilities for both States and companies.

As investors we believe that establishing the respective obligations of States and businesses will enhance the operating environment for companies in which we invest and their long term prospects for financial success. Professor Ruggie's work provides much needed guidance. We therefore call upon companies to implement the Guiding Principles and their due diligence, grievance and other provisions. The Framework and Guiding Principles will be useful tools in our analysis of how companies address human rights risks and help us to evaluate the quality of corporate approaches and performance. They will also enable credible benchmarking of company efforts in a way that has not been possible to date.

We recommend that the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) formally endorse the Guiding Principles at the June 2011 session. We also urge all other stakeholders to support their adoption and implementation. We further encourage the UNHRC to maintain momentum on the issue of human rights following the end of the Special Representative's mandate in June 2011. Specifically, we urge the UNHRC to ensure adequate resources for future activities, including the provision of supplementary direction on the Framework and Guiding Principles and their implementation in areas such as business relationships between companies and States, in particular in conflict-affected areas, dealing with vulnerable groups, monitoring progress and public disclosure.

We look forward to the use of the Guiding Principles by States, companies and investors across the globe as we all seek to mitigate future human rights-related risks.

**The supporting signatories (arranged alphabetically):**

APG Asset Management



ASN Bank



Aviva Investors



Boston Common Asset Management



Calvert Investments



CCLA Investment Management Ltd



Church of Sweden



Cyrte Investments



Element Investment Managers



Ethos Foundation



F&C Asset Management



Folksam



Governance for Owners



Henderson Global Investors



Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility



Mn Services



NEI Investments



Newton Investment Management Limited



Norges Bank Investment Management



PGGM Investments



Rathbone Brothers Plc



Robeco



SEIU Master Trust



SNS Asset Management



Standard Life Investments



Storebrand ASA



The Co-operative Asset Management



Triodos Investment Management



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