To whom it may concern

BY E-MAIL

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Corporate Social Responsibility Update – Guiding Principles for business and human rights

Professor John Ruggie, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Business and Human Rights, has recently released Guiding Principles for the Implementation of the UN ‘Protect, Respect and Remedy’ Framework.

Harvard Professor John Ruggie was appointed Special Representative in 2005 with a mandate to identify and clarify standards of corporate responsibility and accountability regarding human rights. In 2008, he released the ‘Protect, Respect and Remedy’ Framework for managing business and human rights challenges, which was unanimously embraced by the UN Human Rights Council.

The Framework comprises three pillars:

(i) the state duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties, including business, through appropriate policies, regulation, and adjudication;

(ii) the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, which in essence means to act with due diligence to avoid infringing on the rights of others; and

(iii) greater access for victims to effective remedy, judicial and non-judicial.

The Guiding Principles, which are based on extensive research and consultation with stakeholders, are intended to provide practical recommendations and concrete guidance.
to states, businesses and others for the implementation of the Framework. Accordingly, the Guiding Principles comprise a universally applicable, yet flexible, set of principles concrete enough to provide real guidance for states and corporations with respect to human rights impacts.

The purpose of the Guiding Principles is not to create new international law obligations, but rather to integrate existing standards and practices in a uniform template. Balanced and easy to apply, the guidelines are designed to bridge the gap between principle and practice and to encourage businesses worldwide to take part in the protection of human rights.

The Guiding Principles are likely to be widely accepted and applied, and may thereby represent a common ground for states and businesses globally in the human rights area for the years to come. As such, we believe that the Guiding Principles will constitute a great starting point and a powerful tool in the continued work with the integration of business and human rights.

We will continue to monitor the development and provide updates in this area.

If you have any questions or would like to have further information regarding the Guiding Principles, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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