



New online forum for U.N. business & human rights mandate

December 1, 2009 (New York & Geneva) - Today the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on business and human rights, John Ruggie, launched a global online forum, www.srsgconsultation.org. The purpose of the forum is to gather input for the SRSG as he develops guiding principles to operationalize the U.N. "Protect, Respect, Remedy" framework, as requested by the Human Rights Council.

"I've held consultations all over the world as part of my mandate on business and human rights, but this online forum will enable a whole new level of outreach and transparency," said Professor Ruggie. "I hope that a wide array of stakeholders will participate in the forum to share their experiences and reflections."

The U.N. "Protect, Respect, Remedy" framework is made up of three pillars: the *State duty to protect* against human rights abuses by third parties, including business; *the corporate responsibility to respect* human rights, which means to avoid infringing on the rights of others; and *greater access by victims to effective remedy*, judicial and non-judicial.

The forum is currently focused on *the corporate responsibility to respect human rights*, the second pillar of the framework. The forum is divided into sections, each of which contains multiple topics with space for discussion and comment. These topics will remain in place through February 2010, although the SRSG may amend them in response to how the discussion proceeds.

This site was built specifically for the SRSG's mandate; it was created and is being maintained by students at The University of Western Ontario as part of their fourth year Design Project.

Anybody can register to participate in the discussion and post comments. Recognizing that there are legitimate reasons why some cannot comment publicly, private correspondence can be submitted to moderator@srsgconsultation.org. To date the SRSG has not had the resources to translate the forum into other languages; recommendations for high-quality *pro bono* translation services that might be able to do so should be sent to admin@srsgconsultation.org.

The forum is not intended to be an introduction to business and human rights or to the SRSG's mandate. For more detail and background on the mandate, including information about the extensive consultations and research that led to the U.N. "Protect, Respect, Remedy" framework, please visit the SRSG's web portal, which is hosted by the independent Business & Human Rights Resource Centre: <http://www.business-humanrights.org/SpecialRepPortal/Home>.

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