
The Way Forward

Towards a UN Treaty on Business and Human Rights: Options for form and process

Roundtable Discussion

Room XXV, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Wednesday 25 October 2017, 13:15 - 15:00 hrs

In June 2014, the Human Rights Council established the open-ended inter-governmental working group (OEIGWG) to elaborate an international legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. After two sessions in 2015 and 2016 and substantive discussions on the scope and content, it is time to begin negotiations among those parties interested in the treaty initiative on the possible form of such an instrument and explore options for the way forward in order to reach an ambitious and timely result.

How to strengthen the political support of the process across regional groups? How to speed up the process, overcome obstacles, and avoid dead-ends in the negotiations? What are the lessons to be learnt from other highly contested (but ultimately successful) international initiatives, such as the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty? What are the most promising and effective modalities to organize the negotiation process? The envisaged legally binding instrument could take on very different forms. Which options should be considered? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different formats?

After three days of the OEIGWG session, we will be evaluating the political context and possible ways ahead. We invite you to discuss these questions in an informal setting together with representatives from Member States, UN agencies, academia, and civil society organizations. To facilitate the free and open exchange of views, the roundtable discussion will be held under the Chatham House Rules.

Inputs by

Sigrun Skogly, Professor at the Law Faculty of the University of Lancaster

Harris Gleckman, former Chief of the New York Office of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

With initial comments by

- Representative of Ecuador
- Representative of South Africa
- Representative of Member State of African Group
- Representative of Member State of Latin America & Caribbean Group
- Representative of Member State of Asia Pacific Group
- Representative of Member State of Western Europe & Other Group
- Representative of Member State of Eastern European Group

Facilitator: Ana María Suárez Franco, FIAN International

As space for the roundtable discussion is limited, we kindly ask you to RSVP by 20 October 2017 to [karolinseitz\[at\]globalpolicy.org](mailto:karolinseitz[at]globalpolicy.org)

The roundtable discussion will be held in English.

Light refreshments will be served at 13:00 hrs.

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