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UNITED NATIONS FORUM
ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
GENEVA, 25 - 27 NOVEMBER 2024

International Organisation of Employers (IOE)

Business Roundtable with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

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The International Organisation of Employers (IOE) is pleased to invite **its Corporate Partners** and the **leadership of its Employers Federation** to an informal in-person meeting with **Ms Peggy Hicks**, Director of the Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development Division of the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR), on 26 November 2024, in Geneva related to the 2024 UN annual Forum on Business and Human Rights.

Tuesday 26 November 2024

15:00 – 16:00

OHCHR Palais Wilson, Room P1-016 (Address: Rue des Pâquis 52, 1201 Genève)

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This exclusive, invitation-only in-person exchange offers a traditional and unique annual platform for **leading multinational companies** partnering with the IOE and the **leadership of IOE Employers Federations** to engage in a **confidential and impactful dialogue** with the leadership of OHCHR, exploring key developments and possible synergies for joining forces in advancing the business and human rights agenda.

This year, we are delighted to welcome **Ms Peggy Hicks**. Since January 2016, Peggy Hicks has served as Director of the Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development Division of the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR). She has been leading efforts to shape strategic direction to the UN Human Rights Office's work on a broad range of pressing human rights issues, including navigating human rights in the digital age and the expansion of civic space.



Senior business representatives from over **10 to 15 multinational companies** will be attending, as will several of our **Employer Federations** who are at the forefront of this agenda.

Under the theme ***'Navigating the crossroads: The future of the UN Guiding Principles in a context of increasing corporate regulation'***, this dialogue aims to explore the **evolving role of the UN Guiding Principles and its three pillars** in a context of increasing regulation and focus on the corporate responsibility to respect human rights.

AGENDA

15:00 – 15:05	<p>Greetings, introduction of participants and moderation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Roberto Suarez-Santos, IOE Secretary-General
15:05 – 15:15	<p>Opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Peggy Hicks, Director of the Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development Division of the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR)
15:15– 15:55	<p>Tour de table with Q&A</p>
15:55– 16:00	<p>Closing</p>

Guiding questions

The objective is to spark a **spontaneous and open dialogue**. The following questions can serve as a foundation to inspire meaningful discussions:

- **Maintaining Policy Coherence:** *While there is a widespread agreement that the UNGPs remain the global benchmark, current and future regulations diverge in important ways. How can we still ensure legal certainty and policy coherence and prevent fragmentation of competing standards?*
- **Global Ripple Effects of Regulations:** *New human rights due diligence regulations will affect businesses not only in Europe but across the globe. What will this mean for trade, investment, productivity and competitiveness?*
- **Preparing Local Businesses:** *What measures can governments adopt to support domestic businesses in meeting these regulatory demands effectively?*
- **The Binding Treaty Debate:** *IOE and USCIB have consistently and annually engaged in the Binding Treaty negotiations, offering constructive input despite some important concerns on the process and content. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights recently emphasized the need for a treaty. How can such treaty truly enhance human rights protections at the national level without creating a divide between ratifying and non-ratifying States?*
- **Company leverage:** *Increasing attention and expectations are being placed on a company's ability to positively influence the practices of N-level suppliers. Yet in many cases, the effectiveness of leverage is limited. What should the company do in this context?*
- **Greater collaboration at local level:** *How can we increase synergies between companies-Employers Organisations and OHCHR country/regional teams at local level to advance the agenda?*