

An event for business leaders

BUSINESS EXECUTIVES CONFERENCE
Sustainable Business and Investment in the Global Context
Rights, Risks and Responsibilities

0900 AM TO 1615 PM, APRIL 16th 2013, BEIJING, CHINA



OVERVIEW

During the week of 15th April 2013, the UN Global Compact Network China, Tsinghua University School of Economics and Management, the UN Global Compact Office (GCO), the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) Secretariat and the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI) will co-convene a conference aimed at exploring sustainable business and investment in the global context. The focus will be on global operations with particular attention to investing and doing business in high-risk contexts and to how companies should respect human rights. The event will bring together business leaders and investors to share good practices and experiences. Participation in the event is by invitation-only for this business-to-business conversation.

CONTEXT

Global developments: Since the 1990s, corporations have been faced with an increasingly rigorous and intense imperative to earn their license to operate from a range of stakeholders. Business leaders around the world now realize that responsible and sustainable business is far beyond legal compliance and philanthropy.

At the time of writing, 246 Chinese businesses are signatory to the UN Global Compact, and the Local Network China has been consolidated. UN Global Compact participants have committed to respect and support the 10 Principles in all areas of their operations and as such, should take steps to ensure they are pursuing responsible business practices even in difficult operating environments. Why and how are companies and investors applying responsible business and investment practices in high-risk environments around the world? What are some of the innovative examples of how responsible businesses are advancing sustainable development?

In June 2011, the United Nations Human Rights Council endorsed the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights developed by the United Nations Special Representative to the Secretary General on Business and Human Rights (SRSG), Professor John Ruggie. These were supported by a number of governments including the Chinese government. The first six of the ten UN Global Compact principles concern human rights and labour rights.

Issues finding their way into boardrooms across the globe and in China include: community relations and land; competition over scarce natural resources; operating in conflict-affected areas, creating diverse and dynamic workforces; entering new markets around the world; access to capital from investors expecting higher social performance; achieving sustainable labour relations in complex supply chains, including respecting migrant worker rights, and more.

China going global: China's companies are increasingly operating overseas. In 2009, 13,000 Chinese companies operated overseas in over 180 countries, and Chinese companies have increasingly become an integrated part of the globalized economy. Companies of all sizes and sectors operate in high-risk or challenging operating environments and although they can have a positive impact - by helping to build trust among diverse communities, creating jobs, supporting the creation of social enterprises or by stimulating peaceful and sustainable growth in societies that really need support - these companies also face a variety of operating challenges unique to these difficult environments to which there are no easy answers.

Conveners: The UN Global Compact Network China, Tsinghua University School of Economics and Management, the UN Global Compact, the Principles for Responsible Investment, and the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights.



GLOBAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE
ON HUMAN RIGHTS

OBJECTIVES

- Promote responsible business and investment practices by engaging companies to explore the challenges and opportunities of respecting and supporting the UN Global Compact principles in all countries where they operate – especially in high-risk areas
- Build the business case for corporate respect for human rights in global operations, in accordance with the UN Global Compact principles and the UN Guiding Principles, and highlight ways in which companies can respect and support human rights, including through integration of human rights in management systems and business functions
- Introduce tools and resources that can be used by companies to develop policies and procedures to advance progress in these areas
- Share experiences and develop the rationale for considering human rights performance when making business partnership and investment decisions
- Examine the value of partnerships and collective action - among companies, governments, civil society and other stakeholders

AGENDA

0830 AM ARRIVALS

0900 AM WELCOME

0930 AM SESSION ONE: DIALOGUE ON THE EVOLVING CONTEXT, EXPECTATIONS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Corporations are faced with an increasingly rigorous and intense imperative to earn their license to operate from a range of stakeholders. Business leaders around the world now realize that responsible and sustainable business and investment goes far beyond legal compliance and philanthropy.

This session will explore recent trends and developments including the convergence of global CSR norms and expectations in relation to social impacts including the UN Global Compact, ISO 26000, and UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and reflect on the increasing recognition amongst investors of the materiality of sustainability issues. The session format will see high-level addresses responded to by business sharing their experiences within this evolving context.

1100 AM BREAK

1115 AM SESSION TWO: CORPORATE EXPERIENCES AND RESPONSES IN ADDRESSING BUSINESS RISK AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

This session will focus on the “human rights journeys” underway in corporations from different industry sectors and geographies. Speakers will recall the early steps taken within their companies including early policy commitments, stakeholder conversations and efforts to understand key impacts and risks. The following questions will be addressed: What is the business case for respecting human rights? How does corporate social responsibility relate to business and human rights? What are businesses

already doing that can be seen through a human rights lens? How and why do investors engage with companies on these issues?

1245 PM LUNCH

1345 PM SESSION THREE: RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT IN HIGH-RISK AREAS

Companies of all sizes and sectors operate in high-risk or challenging operating environments around the world. They can have a positive impact - by helping to build trust, creating jobs, supporting the creation of social enterprises or by stimulating sustainable growth in societies that need support. However companies also face a variety of operating challenges unique to these environments to which there are no easy answers.

What steps should companies take to ensure they are pursuing responsible business practices aligned with the 10 UN Global Compact principles, even in difficult operating environments around the world? How can companies help to advance sustainable development and inclusive growth? What is the role of investors in promoting responsible practices? This session will explore innovative examples of how companies and investors are applying responsible business and investment practices in high-risk areas of the world.

INCLUDING LAUNCH OF GCO-PRI GUIDANCE ON RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED AND HIGH-RISK AREAS: A RESOURCE FOR COMPANIES AND INVESTORS

1545 PM SESSION FOUR: CLOSING REMARKS AND REFLECTIONS

1615 PM CLOSE AND RECEPTION

BUSINESS EXECUTIVES CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS

For more information and to register email katryn.wright@global-business-initiative.org

ROUNDTABLE FOR PRACTITIONERS – RISK MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

0900 AM – 1330 PM, DATE TBC DURING THE WEEK OF 15TH APRIL 2013

Building on the earlier event's high-level discussions on the global context of 'rights, risks, and responsibilities', this half day session is an opportunity for businesspeople to enter into working sessions with corporate counterparts, from diverse industries and a diversity of corporate functions. Through deeper dialogue and discussions, participants will explore some of the business management systems and processes, methodologies, tools and resources available to manage human rights impacts and risks.

For more information regarding this event please email katryn.wright@global-business-initiative.org