

GANHRI 2021 ANNUAL MEETING

NHRI's ACTIONS FOR THE NEXT DECADE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Online on Zoom

30 June 2021 | 16:30-18:00 CEST

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

June 2021 marks 10 years since the endorsement of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) by the United Nations Human Rights Council. Launched in 2011, and after a decade of implementation, the UNGPs constitute the globally recognized authoritative framework that outline respective duty and responsibility of states and businesses to prevent and address business-related human rights abuses. The UNGPs embed the “protect, respect and remedy” pillars, and carry a vision of *“tangible results for affected individuals and communities, and thereby also contributing to a socially sustainable globalization.”*

In 2010, in the Edinburgh Declaration, NHRIs articulated their role and commitments in relation to advancing human rights in the context of business activities and emphasized the important role they can play in addressing corporate-related human rights challenges, both at the international, regional and national level.

NHRIs’ role is also acknowledged in the text of the UNGPs, for example: *“National human rights institutions that comply with the Paris Principles have an important role to play in helping States identify whether relevant laws are aligned with their human rights obligations and are being effectively enforced, and in providing guidance on human rights also to business enterprises and other non-State actors”.*

In March 2021, the GANHRI Working Group on Business and Human Rights (GANHRI WG BHR), supported by the GANHRI Head Office and in coordination with the United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights hosted a *“Virtual Workshop on NHRIs’ actions for the next decade of implementation of the UNGPs”* with NHRIs from more than 80 countries participating, to discuss NHRI experiences and achievements and identify next steps.

This public event, during GANHRI’s Annual Meeting 2021, will be an opportunity to reflect among NHRIs and with partners on the outcomes of the March Workshop and the contribution of NHRIs to ensuring corporate respect for human rights in the next decade.

The role of the NHRIs is crucial in the implementation of the UNGPs, as they can pressure and encourage governments to take action and meet their duty in preventing and addressing human

rights abuses in the corporate world. They could also, among other things, act as an independent body in facilitating access to remedy, one of the three pillars of the UNGPs.¹

Objective

The objectives of this event will be

- Discuss experiences by NHRIs in implementing the Edinburgh Declaration and promoting implementation of the UNGPs
- Explore how NHRIs can engage on business and human rights in the next decade with a specific focus on critical threats to the enjoyment of human rights:
 - o Technology and human rights: challenges of addressing human in digitalization and emerging work by NHRIs
 - o Environmental degradation, the climate crisis & business and human rights: how can NHRIs support a human-rights centered green transition

Format

1. The event will receive welcome remarks from the GANHRI Acting Chairperson
2. Interventions from two Members of the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, including the current Vice-chair.
3. A panel of NHRIs and experts to discuss how NHRIs can engage on the two thematic topics. Each panelist will make a short presentation, enter into a discussion with the moderator, and then the panel will open to take questions from all in attendance
4. Concluding remarks

The event will be public, with participants from NHRIs, member states, civil society, and UN partners.

The event will benefit from interpretation into all GANHRI languages: Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Members will have the opportunity to interact with each other through Zoom and a dedicated chat box of the Zoom website will allow questions to be posed to the panel
[For more details on accessing the Zoom, please read the dedicated logistic note]

Outcome

Discussion to be summarized, analyzed and submitted as contribution to the UN Working Group for the launch of their « Roadmap for implementation over the next decade » to be released at the 10th UN Forum on Business and Human Rights during 29 November-1 December 2021.

¹ See UN WG on BHR Report on the Role of NHRIs in facilitating access to remedy for business-related human rights abuses, for further guidance: <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/47/39/Add.3>

Agenda

The agenda will include the following items:

Time (CEST)	Item	Potential speakers
5 mins	Welcome remarks	Ali Bin Samikh Al-Marri, GANHRI Acting Chairperson
7 mins	Presentation	Prof Surya Deva, Vice Chair, UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights
7 min	Presentation	Ms. Anita Ramasastry, Member, UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights
5 mins	Panel Discussions	Opening
15 mins		Panel 1: Technology & business and human rights
15 mins		Discussion
15 mins		Panel 2: Environmental degradation, climate crisis & business and human rights
15 mins		Discussion
5 mins		Conclusion