



European Union

Vienna, 19 November 2013

INVITATION

We have the pleasure to invite you to an event to mark the Human Rights Day, titled "Human Rights and Business Dialogue" on:

10 December 2013, 09.30-12.30

at the Europe House ("Haus der Europäischen Union")

Wipplingerstraße 35

A-1010 Wien

To mark the Human Rights Day on 10 December, the European Union is hosting a dialogue among representatives from the European Union, the business world, the United Nations and Civil Society to examine key challenges in implementing human rights and corporate social responsibility into business conduct and operations.

In 2011, the European Commission has adopted an EU strategy on corporate social responsibility and outlined a relevant agenda for action over the period 2011-2014. As the strategy sets out, CSR provides a framework for enterprises to contribute to the European Union's overall objectives of sustainable development and a highly competitive social market economy. In addition, CSR underpins the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Human rights are a prominent aspect of CSR, and enterprises are required to have in place a process to integrate *inter alia* human rights into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders.

As part of its strategy, the European Commission has published an "Introductory Guide to human rights for SMEs" and human rights guidance for three sectors namely, employment and recruitment, Information and Communication Technology and Oil and Gas. Likewise the EU Fundamental Rights

Agency is using the UN principles as part of its human rights and business dimension. All these developments are raising the profile of human rights and business, as well as corporate social responsibility.

The United Nations (UN) have been a leader in getting businesses to commit aligning their operations and strategies with universally accepted principles in areas such as human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. From the launch of the Global Compact in 2000, the development of a framework to guide business activity has been growing with a variety of organisations developing a set of standards for responsible business conduct. It is only recently that these principles have converged and coalesced around a set of core global standards. The expectations on how business should understand and address the social risks and human rights situations associated with their operations are now much clearer and coherent. This is particularly due to the work of the UN in endorsing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights within its “Protect, Respect and Remedy” framework.

The OECD has also recently updated its Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises to take into account the UN Principles, has developed the role of National Contact Points and launched a Global Forum on responsible business conduct.

The purpose of this event is to raise awareness on the efforts made on a global as well as European level to encourage socially responsible business practices and also to identify opportunities and challenges in the practice of corporate social responsibility.

Please see the attached programme for details.

May we kindly ask you to confirm your participation to Ms. Christina Chiotelli, e-mail: christina.chiotelli@ext.eeas.europa.eu by **26 November** 2013 at the latest. For information related to the programme please contact Ms. Christina Chiotelli as well.

We look very much forward to welcoming you.

Yours sincerely,



Györgyi MARTIN ZANATHY

Ambassador – Head of the
Delegation of the European
Union to the International
Organisations in Vienna



Richard HUEHNEL

Head of the Representation of
the European Commission in
Austria



Morten KJAERUM

Director of the European Union
Agency for Fundamental Rights