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UN Human Rights Council endorses principles to ensure businesses respect human rights



Human Rights Council, Geneva

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The United Nations Human Rights Council today endorsed a new set of global guiding principles for business designed to ensure that companies do not violate human rights in the course of the their transactions and that they provide redress when infringements occur. The United Nations Human Rights Council today [endorsed](#) a new set of global guiding principles for business designed to ensure that companies do not violate human rights in the course of the their transactions and that they provide redress when infringements occur.

The Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights outline how States and businesses should implement the UN “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework in order to better manage business and human rights challenges.

The framework is based on three pillars – the State duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties, including business, through appropriate policies, regulation, and adjudication; the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, which means avoiding infringing on the rights of others and to address adverse impacts that occur; and greater access by victims to effective remedy, both judicial and non-judicial.

“The Council’s endorsement establishes the guiding principles as the authoritative global reference point for business and human rights,” said John Ruggie, the Secretary-General’s

Special Representative for Business and Human Rights. “They will also provide civil society, investors and others the tools to measure real progress in the daily lives of people.”

The principles are the product of six years of research led by Professor Ruggie of Harvard University, involving governments, companies, business associations and civil society around the world.

Under the ‘State Duty to Protect,’ the guiding principles recommend how governments should provide greater clarity of expectations and consistency of rules for business in relation to human rights.

The ‘Corporate Responsibility to Respect’ principles provide a blueprint for companies on how to know and show that they are respecting human rights. The ‘Access to Remedy’ principles focus on ensuring that where people are harmed by business activities, there is both adequate accountability and effective redress, judicial and non-judicial.

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