

LAUNCH OF PROJECT BY THE UN SRSG ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS TO PILOT PRINCIPLES FOR COMPANY-LEVEL GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

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The United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on business and human rights is delighted to announce the launch of a pilot project to test the Principles for non-judicial, company-level mechanisms set out in his 2008 and 2009 reports to the UN Human Rights Council. The Principles require that such mechanisms be: legitimate, accessible, predictable, equitable, rights-compatible, transparent and based in dialogue and/or mediation. The pilot will involve five companies on four continents and from five different sectors: mining, apparel, electronic products, oil and gas, and food. The companies are:

- **Correjon** in Colombia - a joint venture of Anglo American, BHP Billiton and Xstrata
- **Esquel Group** based in Hong Kong, China – piloting a mechanism at their apparel facility in Vietnam
- **Hewlett-Packard** – working on a mini-pilot (see below) with two of their suppliers in China
- **Sakhalin II** in Russia –working with Sakhalin Energy Investment Company, the joint venture of Shell, Gazprom, Mitsui and Mitsubishi Corp
- **Tesco** – working with a group of their fruit suppliers in South Africa.

The four main pilots are with Correjon, Esquel Group, Sakhalin II, and Tesco. These will involve collaboration with the companies and their local stakeholders first to understand the local context and typical concerns the mechanism will need to handle, and to review any existing grievance procedures and steps needed to align them with the Principles. The revised and aligned mechanisms will then be monitored and evaluated over a period of 12 months. The learning from the projects will be reported in early 2011, including any implications for the refinement of the Principles themselves.

A smaller project in collaboration with HP and two of its suppliers in China will review their recent work to introduce improved grievance processes and look at their alignment with the Principles. The report of this work will be complete in early 2010.

The SRSG welcomes the support for this project from the International Organisation of Employers, International Chamber of Commerce and Business and Industry Advisory Committee of the OECD. The project is coordinated by the Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School in collaboration with three facilitators: Luc Zandvliet from CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (working with Sakhalin II and Correjon), Doug Cahn of The Cahn Group (working with Esquel Group and Tesco), and a research team from Harvard Negotiation and Mediation Clinical Program led by Stephan Sonnenberg (working with Hewlett-Packard).

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