

Human Rights Council session17

Interactive dialogue with SRSG on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, Professor John Ruggie

Intervention by Norway

Thank you, Mr. President,

Norway thanks the special procedures for their interesting and comprehensive presentations. We want to comment on the report by the Special Representative of the Secretary General on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, Professor John Ruggie.

With the presentation of the Guiding Principles for the implementation of the UN “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework, Professor Ruggie has delivered on his mandate in a sterling manner. The Guiding Principles represent a new and important tool to enhance protection against corporate related human rights abuses. They are the product of six years of research and extensive consultations. They map out what the UN framework actually means in practical terms. We are convinced that if put to work, the Guiding Principles will provide real change on the ground.

A major achievement of professor Ruggie has been to establish a sense of shared purpose and common understanding of business and human rights challenges. Considering the sharp divides that characterized this issue in the past, the support expressed by all stakeholders for the “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework is indeed the best testimony to his inclusive and evidence based approach.

At this milestone it will be of utmost importance to lay a solid foundation for an effective follow up. The Council’s endorsement of the Guiding Principles is key in this regard. This will

consolidate the important work undertaken and establish the Guiding Principles as an authoritative global standard upon which progress can be achieved, step by step. Endorsement of the Principles will give necessary credibility to the follow-up. It will secure a continued leading role for the UN in the area of business and human rights.

Mr. President,

To lock in the gains, Norway and the other core sponsors, Argentina, India, Nigeria and the Russian Federation will propose to establish a mandate focusing on dissemination and implementation of the Guiding Principles. Embedding the Principles across the regions and across business sectors will be the main focus of the new mandate. It will also be vital to secure the continued multi-stakeholder involvement and create a platform for an annual stock taking where all voices can be heard. For this reason the core sponsors will also propose to establish an Annual Forum for business and human rights to maintain and build on the constructive involvement by all stakeholders achieved to date.

Let me express sincere appreciation for the progress we have seen during the tenure of the SRSG, as well as for the inspiring enthusiasm and commitment he has shown throughout his mandate. The standard set will be duly remembered. We are confident that the Guiding Principles will significantly curtail the indignity and injustice still present in the area of business and human rights and bring change where it matters most, in the daily lives of people.

Norway hopes that the strong commitment of the SRSG will be mirrored by a consensual endorsement of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by this Council.

Thank you.