

Concept note

The Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies: Business for a Better World: How companies promote peace, justice, and inclusion

Side-event at the 72nd United Nations General Assembly, September 18th, at 4 pm in the offices of White & Case LLP, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York

Business is promoting peace, justice, inclusion—and can make an even more significant contribution. Through their core activities and Corporate and Social Responsibility efforts, many companies are supporting United Nations (UN) Member States to promote peace, justice, inclusion. Business is also supporting Member States, the United Nations (UN) organization and international system to deliver on the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Companies have information and tools which can strengthen national reporting efforts, further strengthening their contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is important, as National Statistics Offices typically collect only 40-60% of the data needed to report on the 2030 Agenda, and little of the data needed to report on peace, justice, and inclusion.

There is a need to leverage business' contribution to peace, justice, inclusion, and development in all its forms. Business' contribution to peace, justice and inclusion is often not understood, not reflected in national reporting efforts, and not fully leveraged through sustained engagement in national development efforts. There is a need to identify what can be done to increase awareness—both within private sector networks, among governments and civil society organisations— of the role of private sector role in advancing peace, justice, and inclusion. How can businesses be more involved in national reporting processes, and related development efforts?

Side-event objective: leveraging business' contribution to peace, justice, inclusion, and development by:

- Showcasing how business is advancing peace, justice, and inclusion: concrete actions to, for example, reduce illicit financial flows and corruption, promote the rule of law, ensure public access to information and promote fundamental freedoms.
- Increasing awareness of how businesses can strengthen national reporting efforts.
- Highlighting the work that the UN is doing with the private sector to promote a sustainable and equitable vision of progress based upon the UN Charter.
- Strengthening a constituency of visionary business leaders committed to promoting peace, justice, and inclusion, and to working with governments and civil society through reporting processes to achieve this.
- Encouraging Member States' representatives responsible for reporting to engage private sector: future reports draw upon private sector data and tools, and reflect business' contributions to peace and justice.

Invited speakers and respondents include leaders and prominent persons from UN Member States, major global corporations, civil society organisations, UN and other international entities.

Moderator:

- Mr. Nick Kristof, New York Times columnist

Background

The Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies is a coordinating platform for United Nations (UN) Member States, private sector, civil society, and international entities to work together to promote peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. The Global Alliance is:

It is led by the Governments of Cabo Verde, Mexico, Norway, Qatar, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and United Kingdom; civil society organisations the New York University Centre on International Cooperation (NYU CIC), Transparency, Accountability and Participation (TAP) Network, the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA); and private sector companies Deloitte Ltd, LexisNexis, and White&Case LLP. Co-facilitators include the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The Alliance connects Member States with the expertise and resources they need—from wherever it exists in the international system—to be able to report progress towards peace, justice and inclusion, and its links to the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The effect is to leverage the potential of partnerships, data and reporting, to promote peace and prosperity for all people. The UN General Assembly was explicit: the 2030 Agenda can only be achieved if governments, civil society and private sector work together. The Global Alliance is an institutional innovation which enables this joint action.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a universal and transformative vision to eradicate extreme poverty over 15 years. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, the 2030 agenda presents 17 interdependent social, economic and environmental Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address the issues that communities everywhere face at this time of change and challenge: refugee flows, poverty, climate change, terrorism, etc. The 2030 Agenda is an urgent call to massive action at a time of unprecedented opportunity and threat. Governments are responsible for delivering on the 2030 Agenda—but not alone. Rather, the 2030 Agenda envisages the Government as the convenor of an agenda to be implemented by civil society, private sector, academia, national human rights institutions. Achieving the 2030 Agenda, then, requires joint efforts and ‘new ways of working’ at all levels: a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, supported by a UN and international system working in partnership.

SDG 16 commits UN Member States to ‘Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.’ Goal 16 underpins achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Peace underpins progress in all its forms. Without justice—institutions which deliver the goods and services (health, education, infrastructure, etc) necessary to achieve each SDG—they will be achieved. Without inclusion—the ability of all people, in every part of society, to obtain those goods and services, and to participate in the legislative, policy development and planning processes which define where, how, and to whom they are delivered—the needs of vulnerable groups in particular go unmet, and human development is either not achieved, or not sustained.

The 2030 Agenda includes measurable targets and indicators and a reporting framework. Tracking progress against the SDGs is essential to be able to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Reporting promotes:

- **Accountability:** Reporting stimulates action for implementation, promoting progress towards each SDG.
- **Inclusion:** Inclusive planning, monitoring and review processes create an opportunity for people—in all communities, civil society, private sector, and government from local to national level—to influence the decisions that affect them.
- **Information:** When all people, in every part of society, can share relevant information—about their needs, obstacles and opportunities for effective development—laws, policies, plans, projects, programmes and other development initiatives are evidence-based.
- **Effective development:** These processes enable people from diverse constituencies to shape a vision for the society in which they live, work and do business; to define how they will contribute to its realisation; and the support they would need to do so. This shared, nationally-defined vision of a peaceful and prosperous future for all provides the foundation for national development and international support.