



**Mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Human Rights and
Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises**

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1 May 2007

Human rights impact of corporate activity:
Request for information from Special Procedures

Dear colleagues,

In 2005, the then Commission on Human Rights requested the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, with the following mandate (Resolution 2005/69):

- (a) To identify and clarify standards of corporate responsibility and accountability for transnational corporations and other business enterprises with regard to human rights;
- (b) To elaborate on the role of States in effectively regulating and adjudicating the role of transnational corporations and other business enterprise with regard to human rights, including through international cooperation;
- (c) To research and clarify the implications for transnational corporations and other business enterprises of concepts such as “complicity” and “sphere of influence”;
- (d) To develop materials and methodologies for undertaking human rights impact assessments of the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises;
- (e) To compile a compendium of best practices of States and transnational corporations and other business enterprises.

I was appointed SRSG in July 2005.

The mandate was considered by the Commission to be a so-called research mandate, with no monitoring or protection role, and no funding was allocated to undertake country missions. Despite these limitations, I have felt all along the need for greater exposure to the complex situations and issues that lie at the root of the mandate. Accordingly, I have convened a series of regional multi-stakeholder consultations and undertaken industry site visits in several sectors and on several continents, supplemented by meetings with local civil society and trade unions.

These efforts have been immensely useful in informing my work, illustrating both the potential impact as well as the limitations of many of the current efforts to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of corporate activity.

In March 2007, I requested the Human Rights Council to extend my mandate for a final year during which I will prepare views and recommendations on how to move forward in relation to the issues covered by the mandate. In order to ensure that my recommendations do indeed effectively address the underlying challenges, I am seeking additional input based on first-hand experience.

To that end, I am asking the entire body of Special Procedures to share any relevant information with me, particularly those who during their country missions have encountered corporate related human rights issues affecting the right(s) covered by their respective mandates, and/or who receive allegations from individuals or communities about human rights abuses resulting from corporate practices.

Specifically, I would appreciate information about the following:

- Specific cases of allegations of serious human rights abuses by corporations;
- What rights are being impacted by corporate acts and how;
- Particular patterns of abuse in specific regions or sectors;
- Any analysis and/or recommendations you may have made in relation to specific cases or would suggest for patterns of abuse that you may have documented.

If you have any such information that you are able to share with us, please email it to lwendland@ohchr.org. Also, I will be in Geneva in June for the Annual Meeting of Special Procedures and would be delighted to convene a lunchtime meeting on Tuesday 19 June with those of you who would be interested in discussing these matters further.

Many thanks in advance for any information and suggestions you are able to share.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Ruggie".

John G. Ruggie
Special Representative of the Secretary-General