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Report of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises

Summary

The Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises provides an overview of key observations and messages emerging from the thirteenth Forum on Business and Human Rights, held in a hybrid format from 25 to 27 November 2024. The theme of the thirteenth session of the Forum was “Realizing the ‘smart mix of measures’ to protect human rights in the context of business activities”.



I. Introduction

1. Since its first session in 2012, the Forum on Business and Human Rights has become the world's largest event on business and human rights. It was established by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 17/4, in which the Council also endorsed the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework.¹ The Forum is mandated to discuss trends and challenges in the implementation of the Guiding Principles; to promote dialogue and cooperation on issues linked to business and human rights, including challenges faced in particular sectors or operational environments or in relation to specific rights or groups; and to identify good practices.

2. The Forum is organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), guided and chaired by the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises. The present report was prepared by the Working Group in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 53/3, in which the Council invited the Working Group to submit a report on the proceedings and thematic recommendations of the Forum to the Council for its consideration.

3. The programme of the Forum consisted of two plenary sessions and 25 parallel sessions organized by the Working Group, OHCHR, external partners and other organizations on the basis of an open call for sessions and some 200 proposals subsequently received. The programme of work also included 24 snapshot sessions on current business and human rights issues, innovative spaces in the form of informal dialogues and networking hubs, and two consultations, one on the procurement and deployment of artificial intelligence and the other on migration and business and human rights, to inform the Working Group's forthcoming thematic reports to the Human Rights Council² and the General Assembly,³ respectively. In the present report, the Working Group provides a broad overview of the Forum and the key messages emerging from the discussions that took place over the three days. It should be read together with the programme, session concept notes and web recordings, which are available on the website of the Forum.⁴

4. The theme of the thirteenth Forum was "Realizing the 'smart mix of measures' to protect human rights in the context of business activities". Participants in the Forum took an active part in reflecting on what the "smart mix" means now and going into the future, what has worked and not worked, and how the smart mixes that are emerging in different parts of the world should better integrate access to remedy as the third pillar of the Guiding Principles in view of novel challenges.

5. The programme included region-focused sessions dedicated to trends, challenges and emerging practices in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and Western European and other States. Specific attention was paid to the situation of groups at heightened risk of business-related human rights abuses and marginalization, such as Indigenous Peoples, human rights defenders, women, youth and migrant workers, with an emphasis on preventing and addressing intersecting forms of discrimination based on various factors, such as gender, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, social status, religion and disability. The Forum also included a number of thematic and sector-specific sessions, including on the connections between the climate crisis, business and human rights, and on the connections between business, human rights and technology.

6. The Forum gathered a record number of participants – nearly 4,000 in total, with 3,000 registered for in-person participation and another 1,000 registered for virtual

¹ [A/HRC/17/31](#), annex.

² See <https://forumbhr2024.sched.com/event/1gevJ/procurement-and-deployment-of-artificial-intelligence-and-the-ungps-consultation-for-the-working-groups-2025-report-to-the-human-rights-council?linkback=grid>.

³ See <https://forumbhr2024.sched.com/event/1gett/migration-business-and-human-rights-consultation-for-the-working-groups-2025-report-to-the-un-general-assembly?linkback=grid>.

⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/events/sessions/2024/13th-united-nations-forum-business-and-human-rights>.

participation – from 156 countries, representing a wide range of stakeholders (see table below). In addition, a high number of people from around the world accessed Forum sessions on UN Web TV. The hybrid format helped to ensure that a wider and more diverse range of stakeholders from all regions could follow the sessions. Over 64 per cent of registered participants and over 59 per cent of those with official speaking roles identified themselves as women.

<i>Category of participating stakeholders</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Academic institutions	13
Civil society organizations, affected stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples' groups	32
Multi-stakeholder initiatives	2
National human rights institutions	2
Private sector (business enterprises, business/industry associations, consultancies, law firms, investors)	34
States	7
Trade unions	1
United Nations entities/intergovernmental organizations	6
Other	3

II. Key messages from the plenary sessions

A. Opening plenary⁵

7. The thirteenth session of the Forum was opened by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who highlighted the significant challenges of current times, marked by multiplying conflicts, climate chaos and deepening inequalities, alongside the rapid development of new technologies often lacking critical safeguards. The High Commissioner expressed deep concern about business-related human rights abuses, citing the environmental harm caused by the fossil fuel industry, resource exploitation in conflict zones, unlawful artificial intelligence-powered surveillance, forced displacement of Indigenous Peoples and exploitative working conditions that exacerbated injustices. While acknowledging progress, including the adoption of Directive (EU) 2024/1760 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on corporate sustainability due diligence and national action plans on business and human rights, the High Commissioner stressed that voluntary measures were insufficient and called for coherent policy and regulatory frameworks to provide businesses with clear guidance and ensure fair competition and tangible benefits for affected communities. The High Commissioner also emphasized the urgent need to protect human rights defenders and decried the rise of transnational repression enabled by digital technologies, advocating for economies that prioritized human rights and resilience over gross domestic product-focused metrics. The High Commissioner concluded by urging business leaders to embrace long-term stability over short-term gains, leveraging their influence to foster peace, justice and sustainable development, and reminded all stakeholders of their responsibility to act as good, responsible ancestors by leaving an honourable legacy for future generations.

8. The Chair of the Working Group indicated that the theme of the thirteenth Forum was aimed at discussing the implementation of a smart mix of measures, both obligatory and voluntary, and both national and international, to guarantee human rights in the context of business activities in accordance with the Guiding Principles. The Chair emphasized that States had a duty to protect human rights in business activities through effective public policies and regulations, ensuring accountability and remedies for affected individuals and communities. Highlighting the need for policy coherence, the Chair stressed that mandatory human rights due diligence should be a key regulatory tool, particularly in the face of pressing

⁵ See <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1g/k1g47ip0y3>.

global challenges, such as climate change, armed conflicts and rapid technological advancements. The Chair underscored the importance of fostering responsible business conduct through legal, policy and private sector initiatives, while also ensuring strong accountability mechanisms. In addition, the Chair reaffirmed the need to protect human rights defenders, condemning any threats or reprisals, and stressed that the Forum must remain a safe and inclusive space for meaningful dialogue.

9. The Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact pointed out the initiative's upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary, emphasizing the evolution of the business and human rights agenda from a novel concept to a widely recognized part of practice, with the Global Compact growing to include over 20,000 participating businesses, but acknowledged that significant work remained. The Executive Director underscored the importance of the smart mix approach, noting how businesses had utilized the Guiding Principles to transform their strategy, operations and outcomes, while addressing persistent challenges posed by fragmented regulatory frameworks across regions. The Executive Director framed those challenges as opportunities to view human rights not only as a moral imperative, but also as a strategy for enhanced business performance and innovative social solutions. Lastly, the Executive Director called upon businesses to harness their influence to shape corporate values, urged States to create environments that aligned with human rights and emphasized civil society's critical role in ensuring accountability and driving progress.

10. The Assistant Director General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) emphasized that the core goal of advancing the Guiding Principles was to ensure the protection of human rights in business operations and provide effective remedies for victims. The Assistant Director stressed that achieving that required a smart mix of measures through an integrated approach, aligning human rights, social priorities, environmental concerns and economic development. Highlighting practical implementation, the Assistant Director pointed out the importance of robust labour administration, effective social dialogue mechanisms and access to labour justice as essential components, and identified emerging priorities, such as universal social protection, reducing the expanding informal economy and implementing safeguards for new technologies and digitalization. Concluding, the Assistant Director announced key upcoming ILO initiatives, including a 2025 technical meeting on access to labour justice and the launch of a global coalition for social justice aimed at accelerating progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

11. The Commissioner for Justice of the European Commission, speaking in a pre-recorded video message, emphasized the importance of corporate sustainability due diligence, highlighting the legally binding instruments recently adopted in the context of the European Union and aimed at ensuring fairness and consistency across the single market. The Commissioner stated that, building on international frameworks, such as the Guiding Principles and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct, the European Union had taken a balanced approach to responsibility by requiring large companies to take reasonable steps while protecting smaller businesses from undue burdens. The Commissioner stressed that proper due diligence demanded investment in value chains and responsible purchasing practices, with the ultimate goal of improving global human rights and environmental conditions. The Commissioner underscored that responsible business practices were not just ethical, but also economically beneficial, driving efficiency, resilience and competitiveness. The growing international momentum for due diligence regulations, including United Nations-level negotiations on a legally binding instrument, was welcomed as a sign of progress, with the European Union looking forward to further engagement in shaping global standards.

12. The Minister of Human Rights of the Democratic Republic of the Congo stressed that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly eradicating poverty, promoting social justice and protecting the environment, depended on fundamental respect for human rights. The representative emphasized that human rights should be viewed not as a constraint, but as a catalyst for fostering fair and equitable trade. Calling for stronger legal frameworks aligned with international standards, enhanced monitoring mechanisms and improved access to justice for victims, the representative urged concrete actions and steadfast political will to

ensure that business activities contributed to community well-being while upholding human rights.

13. The Head of Due Diligence of OECD highlighted the significant challenges in ensuring responsible business conduct, noting that only 12 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets were currently on track. The speaker emphasized three critical areas for progress: consistency in the design and implementation of policy measures, policy cooperation in global supply chains and fostering a transition mindset. The speaker noted that 80 per cent of Governments adhering to OECD guidelines had reported implementation activities, with 51 Governments establishing national contact points as grievance mechanisms. Announcing a new OECD policy platform for cooperation on human rights due diligence, the speaker stressed that meaningful progress required a blend of patience and capacity-building, particularly for developing economies and small and medium-sized enterprises. As her key message, the speaker underscored the importance of moving beyond process to achieve measurable outcomes through concrete targets and stakeholder engagement.

14. The Vice-President of Impact and Sustainability of Cotopaxi acknowledged the persistence of human rights abuses in supply chains and the limited progress made despite improved human rights due diligence processes over the previous decade. The speaker described how her business uncovered abuses annually, despite robust due diligence efforts, citing challenges such as predatory recruitment practices, child labour, forced labour, situations that left workers unprotected, the growing impact of climate change on workers, and the likelihood of the detrimental impact of tariffs on workers. The speaker emphasized the need to move beyond individual company efforts to ensure industry-wide collaboration and stronger government regulation. The speaker concluded with a call for mandatory measures to complement voluntary ones.

15. The founder and coordinator of the Center for Orang Asli Concerns stressed that a smart mix of measures must be grounded in moral principles, such as shared responsibility for the well-being of all. The speaker contrasted Indigenous approaches to resource use, which prioritized harmony with nature, against exploitative business practices. The speaker also identified the lack of recognition of Indigenous Peoples' spiritual connection to their lands and the inadequacy of remedy mechanisms based solely on written laws, which often ignored Indigenous legal systems. The speaker called for the nationalization of natural resources to prevent monopolization and urged States to enact equitable laws and policies that ensured sustainability and recognized the rights of nature.

16. The coordinator of Benet Mosop Indigenous Community Association, speaking on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus, denounced what his Association defined as the genocide and ecocide affecting Indigenous communities, emphasizing their systematic displacement and criminalization for protecting ancestral lands and resources. The speaker highlighted how projects in sectors such as mining and agribusiness, and so-called climate solutions such as carbon trading and biofuel production, had forcibly displaced Indigenous communities from their lands. The speaker also pointed to the alarming violence against Indigenous human rights defenders, noting that over 40 per cent of murdered defenders were from Indigenous communities, with women defenders facing heightened risks. Calling for urgent action, the speaker demanded respect for Indigenous Peoples' rights, justice for human rights defenders facing violence, protection against exploitation disguised as climate action, and legally binding measures to hold corporations accountable. The speaker concluded by stating: "nothing about Indigenous Peoples without Indigenous Peoples".

B. Closing plenary⁶

17. The thirteenth session of the Forum concluded with the Working Group and key stakeholders sharing their views on the main takeaways from the Forum. The closing plenary was moderated by the Vice-Chair of the Working Group.

⁶ See <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1q/k1qkxsc95f>.

18. The President of the Human Rights Council reflected on the achievements of the Forum over three days, underscoring the critical importance of implementing the Guiding Principles to address modern global challenges. The President emphasized the interconnectedness of issues such as climate change, labour rights and corporate accountability, which transcended national borders. The President urged States to fulfil their primary obligations under international human rights law, while ensuring that business practices aligned with the Guiding Principles. The President also highlighted the need for stronger collaboration with financial organizations and other United Nations entities to address emerging challenges, particularly the profound impact of climate change on human rights.

19. The Ambassador to Counter Modern Slavery, People Smuggling and Human Trafficking of Australia announced the recent appointment by Australia of its first Anti-Slavery Commissioner, to enhance awareness of and support for victims and businesses. The speaker highlighted regional collaborations, such as the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, emphasizing the promotion of ethical recruitment and supply chain transparency. The speaker underscored the importance of engaging diverse actors, including technology companies, civil society and victims, to address modern slavery comprehensively.

20. A representative of the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus called for respect for and the realization of Indigenous Peoples' rights, emphasizing adherence to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The representative criticized voluntary compliance measures and advocated for legally binding frameworks to ensure accountability for abuses of Indigenous and environmental rights. The representative called for an end to the criminalization of Indigenous defenders and emphasized the protection of Indigenous-led sustainable practices as viable solutions to pressing climate challenges.

21. The Vice-President for Asia of the International Organization of Employers acknowledged the increasingly complex human rights landscape for businesses amid evolving regulations and societal expectations. The speaker highlighted the pivotal role of businesses in societal development, advocating for respect for human rights alongside fostering innovation and job creation. The speaker called for capacity-building initiatives targeted at small and medium-sized enterprises and emphasized localized approaches to implementing the Guiding Principles. Stressing the importance of constructive dialogue, the speaker urged stakeholders to move beyond adversarial perspectives and focus on collaborative efforts to build trust.

22. The Global Adviser on Business and Human Rights of the United Nations Development Programme recognized the progress made in implementing the Guiding Principles over the previous 13 years, but identified persistent gaps, such as the lack of legally binding measures and the need for inclusive frameworks. The speaker noted the risks of inadequate governance and the imbalance of power among stakeholders. The speaker also emphasized the financial sector's role in addressing inequality, and the need for tailored, context-specific solutions to challenges, including climate change's adverse effects on human rights. Lastly, the speaker highlighted fostering partnerships as critical to creating sustainable, rights-respecting business practices.

23. The Global Public Policy Lead of Tony's Chocolonely emphasized the need for collaboration over competition in addressing human rights and sustainability challenges in supply chains. The speaker underscored that true progress required shared responsibility and transparency. The speaker highlighted the importance of addressing issues such as child labour and deforestation by tackling poverty as their root cause, and noted that businesses should focus on social, environmental and operational traceability, and fair pay to ensure a living income, guaranteeing long-term commitments, supporting good practices and fostering strong partnerships with local cooperatives. Lastly, the speaker noted that a collaborative business model enhanced supply chain resilience, ensured data efficiency and secured supply while allowing businesses to compete.

24. The Director of the Latin American Observatory on Business and Human Rights, Externado University of Colombia, emphasized the need for overcoming opposing approaches for implementing the Guiding Principles and balancing legal obligations with

business perspectives through a holistic, multi-stakeholder dialogue. The speaker advocated for binding measures to complement voluntary initiatives, ensuring that market and profit considerations aligned with the protection of human rights and the environment. The speaker also called for a smart mix of measures that held businesses accountable, stressing that no company should fail in its responsibility to uphold human rights. The speaker questioned how effective any measure could be in a challenging geopolitical context.

25. The Chair of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand emphasized the importance of raising awareness of the Guiding Principles. The speaker highlighted the role of national human rights institutions in encouraging due diligence processes and addressing challenges in access to justice and remedy. The speaker called for enhanced cross-border collaborations and stronger legal frameworks to hold businesses accountable for their activities. Lastly, the speaker stressed the need for both recommendations and obligations to ensure effective human rights due diligence.

26. The Head of Communications and Advocacy and Personal Assistant to the Secretary General of the Central Organization of Trade Unions of Kenya emphasized the importance of coherence in implementing effective remedies at both the international and the national levels. The representative highlighted the role of trade unions in collaborating with international organizations to implement global standards locally and called for mandatory human rights due diligence with enforcement mechanisms. The representative advocated for investing in social dialogue, a tripartite system, and judicial mechanisms to strengthen access to remedy. Lastly, the representative underscored the need to strengthen labour ministries and to equip trade unions to address challenges posed by artificial intelligence and the digital economy, which presented new grounds for human rights abuses.

27. The Vice-Chair of the Working Group thanked the speakers, organizers, participants and volunteers. She concluded that a clear trend was emerging, namely, that more and more mandatory requirements were developing at the international, regional and national levels, along with jurisprudence of judicial and quasi-judicial bodies. However, she emphasized the need, for that legislation to be effective and implemented, to continue awareness-raising and capacity-building, engaging in dialogue and protecting human rights defenders.

28. Additional takeaways from the closing session and an overview of the sessions held by the Forum are summarized below.

III. Issues in focus

29. During a session dedicated to the intersection of finance, investors, the environmental, social and governance framework, and the just transition to sustainable energy systems, speakers highlighted the role of sustainable investment in addressing climate change, inequality and energy access, emphasizing initiatives such as nature-based investment platforms, decarbonization and renewable energy development. Speakers underscored the importance of supporting vulnerable communities, ensuring equitable outcomes and employing innovative financial mechanisms such as blended finance to de-risk investments. The significance of public-private collaboration, mandatory environmental and social impact assessments, and direct funding for grass-roots initiatives was also stressed, and speakers criticized “false solutions” such as certain large-scale energy projects and advocated for community-driven models as scalable alternatives. Overall, the speakers in the session called for inclusive, transparent approaches to finance and investment, prioritizing human rights, environmental protection and the active participation of marginalized groups in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

30. During a session on responsible business conduct in the context of artificial intelligence, participants explored the multifaceted challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence governance. Highlighted in the discussions was the importance of integrating human rights frameworks, such as the Guiding Principles, into artificial intelligence development and deployment. One speaker underscored the need for inclusive artificial intelligence governance, particularly in addressing risks to vulnerable populations, including children. Speakers also emphasized the underrepresentation of marginalized groups, advocating for global, multi-stakeholder approaches to mitigate biases and ensure equity.

Innovative methodologies such as community-led human rights impact assessments were mentioned as ways of addressing artificial intelligence impacts, while speakers called for accessible grievance mechanisms and stakeholder engagement. Overall, what emerged from the session was the critical need for ethical artificial intelligence governance, transparency and accountability, alongside efforts to foster inclusive participation across all sectors.

31. During a session dedicated to climate litigation, speakers explored the strategic use of legal action to address the climate crisis, focusing on the intersection of environmental law and human rights. One speaker highlighted the need for capacity-building and proactive stakeholder involvement in developing actionable climate litigation strategies, while other speakers emphasized the importance of adaptation, just transition and addressing societal inequalities through comprehensive climate governance. Speakers also discussed key landmark cases, underscoring the growing role of framework remedies aimed at changing policy and widening access to these remedies, and heightened accountability for States and businesses. A speaker called for intersectional and intergenerational justice, highlighting the urgency of the transition to renewable energy and inclusive economic policies that respected human rights. Another speaker examined the role of climate litigation in shifting focus from short-termism to long-term accountability, advocating for transparency and harmonized regulations that prioritized vulnerable communities. Throughout the discussion, speakers addressed challenges such as resistance from anti-climate litigation, greenwashing and the incorporation of Indigenous and community-driven approaches to ensure inclusive and just outcomes in climate justice.

32. In a session dedicated to the legally binding instrument on business and human rights under development by the Open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights, speakers discussed the need for an enforceable treaty to address gaps in corporate accountability and align with the Guiding Principles, emphasizing access to justice for victims and the importance of stakeholder involvement. Speakers also noted the urgency of advancing negotiations, advocating for more frequent intersessional consultations. Moreover, speakers emphasized the need for stronger accountability mechanisms to combat supply chain abuses and called for the treaty to be aligned with practical realities and existing European Union frameworks, warning against disproportionate burdens on emerging markets. One speaker also underscored the importance of consulting businesses during negotiations to ensure actionable obligations, while another argued for integrating environmental and human rights issues and ensuring scalable compliance for small and medium-sized enterprises and stressed the centrality of labour rights, robust monitoring mechanisms and balanced due diligence obligations. Members of the audience raised concerns about the treaty's scope, market uncertainties and gaps in addressing supply chain abuses. Speakers responded by emphasizing the need for proportional obligations, environmental accountability and harmonized global standards that addressed the unique challenges of both multinational corporations and smaller enterprises.

33. During a session on the unique challenges and opportunities faced by small and medium-sized enterprises in integrating human rights due diligence into their practices, in which their crucial role in global supply chains and local communities was emphasized, speakers highlighted the limited resources of small and medium-sized enterprises, making it essential to provide accessible tools, such as the Business and Human Rights Navigator of the United Nations Global Compact, and emphasize the need for practical training. Speakers discussed how small and medium-sized enterprises, while spurred on by regulations such as the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act of Germany, faced barriers such as limited financial and human resources, lack of sustainability departments and a need for localized tools and training, as seen in the Helpdesk on Business and Human Rights in Germany and the Responsible Business Hub in Serbia, which provided workers of small and medium-sized enterprises with materials and guidance in their native languages. Speakers emphasized the importance of making frameworks such as the Guiding Principles accessible, leveraging existing resources, such as the Corporate Social Responsibility Risk Check developed by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the SME Compass developed by Germany, and fostering collaboration through sectoral initiatives. Key insights included the need for small and medium-sized enterprises to collaborate with larger corporations, access financial support and integrate cultural perspectives, particularly in conflict-affected areas. Participants also

underscored the role of trade policies and capacity-building initiatives in helping small and medium-sized enterprises to overcome barriers to adopting responsible business conduct. A representative of a Māori-led enterprise provided examples of how the enterprise had implemented Indigenous knowledge approaches, highlighting the value of tailored, culturally grounded solutions. Overall, speakers noted that, to support small and medium-sized enterprises, capacity-building initiatives, user-friendly resources, financial support mechanisms and the inclusion of provisions specific to small and medium-sized enterprises in regulations were needed, as were effective strategies that engaged local contexts and amplified the voices of small and medium-sized enterprises, which, as community-centric entities, held significant potential for sustainable and responsible business practices.

34. During a session on effective partnerships to promote fundamental rights at work, key challenges and progress in tackling forced labour and child labour across different regions and sectors were discussed. One speaker highlighted the persistence of child labour exploitation and noted that 27.6 million people were in forced labour, stressing the importance of global partnerships and social dialogue in that context, and noted challenges such as trade unions being treated as threats. Another speaker also discussed supply chain suppression, recognizing progress through mandatory regulations but noting the slow adoption of human rights due diligence, particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises. Participants outlined good practices, such as the “Boys and Girls to School” initiative in Guatemala, the leadership of France in Alliance 8.7, an initiative with an emphasis on legal frameworks and corporate diligence, and the ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labour and Child Labour Platform, which supported knowledge-sharing and on-the-ground interventions, such as providing health coverage for workers in Côte d’Ivoire. Discussions also addressed informal economies, which complicated labour rights enforcement, and participants warned of parallel economies where forced labour-produced goods were diverted to regions with weaker regulations. Overall, speakers emphasized the need for binding regulations, improved corporate accountability and strengthened cooperation between businesses and Governments to combat forced and child labour effectively.

35. One session was dedicated to the arms industry and human rights due diligence. Speakers discussed the arms industry’s responsibilities, highlighting regulatory gaps in Directive (EU) 2024/1760. Key legal frameworks were highlighted, including the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, the Guiding Principles and the Arms Trade Treaty, with speakers emphasizing the inadequacy of current enforcement regimes. Speakers provided examples of challenges, such as the struggle against firearms trafficking in Mexico, including strategic litigation against arms distributors in the United States of America, the illicit arms crisis in South Sudan, which was exacerbated by corruption and porous borders, and the devastating impact of arms exports on civilians in Yemen, urging accountability from Western suppliers. One speaker noted the role of financial institutions in mitigating human rights risks, highlighting challenges in access to data and corporate secrecy. Overall, what was underscored in the discussion was the urgent need for stricter oversight and accountability in the arms sector.

36. During a session on the inclusive value chain, strengthening cooperation among stakeholders for impactful human rights due diligence legislation was discussed, as were challenges in implementing effective human rights due diligence and possible solutions. Participants emphasized international cooperation in supply chain sustainability and fair wages. Participants highlighted power imbalances, called for a worker-centric approach and stressed the need to include rights holders in policymaking. Audience members raised the challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises, barriers to stakeholder engagement and corporate human rights abuses, and speakers responded by advocating for capacity-building, fair procurement practices and collaborative models. Notable examples were discussed, such as Directive (EU) 2024/1760, but it was recognized that the gaps in resources and awareness and corporate power imbalances persisted. A speaker also listed future priorities, such as supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, ensuring a living wage, shifting from compliance-driven to inclusive systems, leveraging legislative momentum while overcoming financial and knowledge barriers and recognizing civil society, academia and trade unions as key stakeholders in advancing best practices and protecting human rights.

37. During a session dedicated to addressing racism online and rights-respecting content moderation, speakers discussed how online platforms were amplifying racism and discussed measures for responsible content moderation. One speaker emphasized how social media normalized hate speech and incitement to violence and called for algorithmic transparency, hostile language classifiers and artificial intelligence audits to counter biases. Another speaker highlighted structural inequalities in Internet access, pointing out that millions remained disconnected, which limited marginalized communities' participation, criticized artificial intelligence biases, such as facial recognition failures for darker-skinned individuals, and condemned dismissals of content moderators as a sign of corporate neglect. The speakers underscored the need for stakeholder collaboration and localized enforcement strategies, such as language-specific hate speech detection and sensitive language policy revisions. They also called for the adoption of anti-racist principles for business. The participants in the discussion underscored the need for stronger anti-discrimination laws, legal recognition of vulnerable groups, corporate accountability and enhanced cross-sector collaboration to address online racism effectively.

38. In the session on access to effective remedy, speakers debated the necessity of having mandatory measures to ensure justice for victims of business-related human rights abuses. Some voluntary measures were also presented as a response to the systemic challenges of State-based mechanisms and the internal grievance mechanisms of businesses. Speakers identified the main challenges with respect to existing State-based mechanisms, in particular delays, lack of trust from victims, inefficiency and the burden of proof on victims. Speakers also highlighted some of the issues with regard to voluntary grievance mechanisms at the operational level, in particular their inefficacy and the fear of reprisal. With regard to judicial remedy, a speaker underscored how the mandatory nature of Directive (EU) 2024/1760 could have a positive impact on access to remedy. A speaker explained how binding agreements between trade unions and companies had had positive consequences for workers' access to remedies, including in the textile and garment sector. A speaker explained how a cross-company grievance mechanism in a specific sector in Mexico had provided adequate remedy for workers, while being complementary to judicial processes. In addition, a speaker outlined the increasing number of remedies that companies had offered to victims, acting upon the recommendations of a non-profit organization that handled grievances for its 70 multinational business members. The questions and answers portion of the session covered key challenges, including document preservation for evidence, the inclusion of small and medium-sized enterprises in remedy frameworks, corporate power imbalances and the risks faced by human rights defenders.

39. The participants in the session on transforming business and human rights commitments into change through youth-driven initiatives explored the transformative role of youth in addressing human rights challenges. Speakers emphasized the importance of youth-led initiatives in areas such as sustainability, technology and advocacy, and highlighted how young people were already driving solutions in transparency and accountability, but stressed that States needed supportive laws to facilitate those efforts. One speaker focused on the urgency of climate action and criticized the insufficient policies presented at the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, showcasing how youth initiatives could contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Speakers, furthermore, shared good practices, such as the youth employment programme of Ecuador, which had successfully integrated young people into the workforce through fiscal incentives and quotas. Looking ahead, speakers stressed the need for stronger democratic institutions to implement policies, especially in climate justice, and emphasized the empowerment of Indigenous youth, advocating for the protection of cultural identity and intergenerational collaboration with older persons. Overall, the participants in the session underscored gaps, such as limited youth representation, digital divides and insufficient protection for human rights defenders, while recommending solutions such as capacity-building, digital access and policy safeguards to ensure youth inclusion in decision-making processes and business and human rights practices.

IV. Groups at risk

40. The session on Indigenous land rights in the context of large-scale land acquisition highlighted the systemic challenges faced by Indigenous communities in relation to economic projects and their right to land and natural resources. Speakers shared examples of land dispossession, lack of human rights due diligence, lack of meaningful consultation with Indigenous Peoples and the absence of respect for the principle of free, prior and informed consent. While highlighting that, in some cases, States had allowed businesses to encroach on Indigenous lands and had not made sure that fair compensation was provided and that access to remedies was guaranteed, speakers also mentioned that legal frameworks existed to protect Indigenous land rights and to restitute land that had been unjustly dispossessed from Indigenous Peoples, in particular in Colombia. However, those protection frameworks often lacked strong enforcement mechanisms, including at the judicial level, and could be hampered by corporate capture and corporate accountability. Both hindered their effectiveness. Another speaker shared an experience of positive efforts to include respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including their right to land and to give their free, prior and informed consent, in the human rights due diligence processes that she undertook within an investment portfolio, but highlighted the challenges of undertaking that burdensome exercise for every investee and collecting all the information needed or meeting with affected persons. Another speaker noted that businesses frequently did not carry out proper land title studies as part of their human rights due diligence process and failed to recognize historical contexts shaped by armed conflict, leading to continued human rights abuses. Lastly, speakers called upon States to introduce a stronger international and domestic legal framework, including mandatory measures to uphold the principle of free, prior and informed consent and stricter enforcement of human rights obligations. They also urged businesses, including investment firms, to enhance their human rights due diligence process and to meaningfully engage with Indigenous Peoples to ensure that Indigenous land rights were respected and that further human rights abuses were prevented.

41. In a session dedicated to women human rights defenders, Indigenous Peoples and Afrodescendent communities, participants examined the effectiveness of voluntary and mandatory approaches in safeguarding these groups' rights. Speakers highlighted the systemic exploitation of migrant workers, particularly in agriculture, construction and domestic work, stressing the need for stronger accountability mechanisms and inclusive policies. Discussions were also focused on the adverse impacts of megaprojects on Indigenous and Afrodescendent communities, and the importance of equitable and inclusive energy transitions centred around local voices was emphasized. Concerns were raised about superficial consultations with Indigenous groups, prompting calls for Indigenous-led frameworks that upheld cultural norms, collective rights and the principle of free, prior and informed consent. One speaker underscored the need for binding legal frameworks to hold businesses accountable and ensure access to remedies, citing progress through initiatives such as Directive (EU) 2024/1760. Speakers highlighted good practices, such as the human rights-focused public procurement policies of Sweden, implemented since 2014, which had improved labour conditions despite ongoing challenges in monitoring and enforcement due to resource constraints. The session's key discussion points included ensuring that large-scale renewable projects delivered equitable benefits while minimizing environmental and social harm, strengthening protections for women human rights defenders in high-risk sectors, enhancing enforcement mechanisms for human rights regulations, expanding legal safeguards for Indigenous Peoples, Afrodescendent communities, migrant workers and environmental defenders, and aligning public procurement policies with international human rights standards to promote corporate accountability and fair labour practices.

42. Participants in another session explored the importance of a smart mix of measures to protect and respect the rights of LGBTI+ persons in business activities, under the three pillars of the Guiding Principles. The Working Group presented the report that had been submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session.⁷ Speakers emphasized the role of States in enacting and enforcing inclusive policies and legislation, ensuring legal protections against discrimination and fostering coherent, non-discriminatory regulations. Throughout the

⁷ [A/79/178](#).

session, businesses were urged to respect the rights of LGBTI+ persons by promoting workplace inclusion, ensuring equal opportunities and ensuring respect for human rights in supply chains. Speakers highlighted positive practices, such as legal developments, including strengthened anti-discrimination laws and national action plans promoting corporate accountability, as had been adopted in Belgium. Participants in the discussions underscored the systemic barriers faced by LGBTI+ persons, particularly transgender persons, in accessing employment, workplace protections and leadership opportunities, with calls for businesses to implement robust anti-discrimination policies and mechanisms. Speakers also stressed the need for bold leadership, human rights risk assessment and strategic collaboration to uphold non-discrimination responsibilities amid sociopolitical challenges. Effective grievance mechanisms, partnerships with civil society and engagement with LGBTI+ organizations, movements and communities were presented as essential for meaningful progress. Overall, participants in the session reinforced the understanding that fostering an inclusive workplace was not only an ethical obligation but also a driver of innovation, economic resilience and social progress.

43. For a second consecutive year, the Working Group organized a session with key stakeholders to analyse the intersection between the business and human rights agenda and the rights of persons with disabilities. Drawing upon the discussion held in 2023, during the 2024 edition of the Forum, the co-organizers sought to foster a discussion of how reasonable accommodation was a key element for upholding the rights of persons with disabilities. During the session, citing examples such as accessibility projects implemented in Senegal or the work done by the national service for persons with disabilities of Chile, speakers highlighted the importance of fostering collaboration between the public and the private sectors to advance inclusivity, emphasizing that accommodations should be seen as early investments rather than as burdens. Speakers noted progress, including the establishment of legal frameworks, improved business accountability, cultural shifts promoting open-minded environments and the adoption of inclusive technologies such as screen readers. However, significant gaps persisted, such as limited public awareness, the perception of accessibility as costly and as a financial burden rather than as an investment, and insufficient diversity in tailored solutions. Businesses were urged to actively involve persons with disabilities in decision-making, develop transparent and accessible technologies and embrace accommodations to enhance long-term performance. Speakers called upon Governments to enforce stricter inclusion regulations, ensure fair treatment in workplaces and strengthen partnerships with private enterprises to share resources. Lastly, speakers recognized the critical role of organizations of persons with disabilities and civil society more broadly in advocating for change, bridging gaps and fostering global collaboration to promote inclusion as a core human right and organizational value.

V. Regional trends

44. The forum included sessions dedicated to discussions of trends and challenges in specific regions.

A. African States

45. The discussion in the African regional session began with a speaker introducing regional trends on business and human rights, focusing on the impact of the Guiding Principles on courts and judicial mechanisms. Emphasis was placed on the growing momentum of the business and human rights agenda in the region, and the role of lawyers in advancing the conversation was also highlighted. Speakers pointed out existing judicial and non-judicial mechanisms and acknowledged the ongoing efforts of African States, noting their progress in developing national action plans. Speakers also stressed the importance of clear national action plans and legislative frameworks on business and human rights aligned with international human rights standards. It was noted that conflict contexts required dedicated attention. Speakers also highlighted critical challenges such as environmental degradation, poor community access to information, and housing development in wetlands where communities lived, and recommended stronger monitoring and capacity-building for

communities on their rights and how to claim them and on available remedial avenues. Overall, speakers emphasized the importance of State action in creating environments where businesses could better respect human rights and reiterated the need for African countries to develop a smart mix of strategies that integrated voluntary measures such as national action plans, with mandatory human rights due diligence requirements and strong accountability mechanisms, underscoring the importance of rights-respecting business activities in order to advance inclusive and sustainable development.

B. Asia-Pacific States

46. In the session on Asia and the Pacific, speakers examined the progress and challenges of national action plans on business and human rights across different countries, highlighting gaps in implementation and enforcement. One speaker outlined the business and human rights strategies of Indonesia, including capacity-building for businesses, public sector policy development and guidance mechanisms, noting that, while 51 per cent of public institutions were implementing the national action plan, broader adoption reportedly remained a challenge. Another speaker reflected on the first national action plan of Japan, from 2020, which allegedly lacked clear enforcement mechanisms and measurable indicators, prompting revisions in the second national action plan to enhance corporate governance and human rights due diligence. Furthermore, speakers called for mandatory human rights due diligence laws to ensure corporate accountability and international compliance. Overall, speakers underscored common challenges, such as limited enforcement, weak corporate awareness of the Guiding Principles and the Sustainable Development Goals and ongoing risks for affected populations already at heightened risk of vulnerability, particularly migrant workers. Speakers emphasized the need for stronger regulatory frameworks, improved business responsibility measures and greater government involvement in enforcing human rights standards in business practices.

C. Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

47. Participants in the session examined key challenges, positive practices and opportunities with regard to advancing the business and human rights agenda in the region, focusing in particular on the implications of European legislative developments for the region. Speakers stressed that, while few large businesses in the region fell under the scope of Directive (EU) 2024/1760, many small and medium-sized enterprises were part of the supply chains of larger businesses that did fall under its scope, making implementation complex. The speakers discussed the fact that human rights due diligence efforts were still in their early stages, requiring greater awareness and capacity-building among businesses and government authorities. Law enforcement faced new challenges, necessitating updated regulatory responses. Positive practices were shared, such as the steps taken by Poland in developing two national action plans with civil society and evaluating a national human rights due diligence directive. Furthermore, speakers noted that future efforts should prioritize stakeholder partnerships and effective engagement, enhanced corporate accountability and legally binding human rights due diligence legislation, while also addressing barriers to legal remedy, simplifying reporting requirements and ensuring stronger workers' rights protection, particularly for those in high-risk sectors, such as agriculture, construction and domestic work.

D. Latin American and Caribbean States

48. Participants in the session highlighted the challenges and opportunities related to business and human rights in Latin America and the Caribbean, focusing in particular on implementation gaps in existing human rights legislation. They discussed key challenges, such as the lack of consistent enforcement of laws, pressure on natural resources due to the energy transition, persecution of human rights defenders and the discrimination faced by groups and sectors at heightened risk of vulnerability and marginalization, in particular the LGBTI+ community. Despite these challenges, good practices were noted, such as existing

legislation in various countries, which could be highly effective if properly enforced, and the active involvement of civil society in shaping business and human rights frameworks. Speakers also discussed opportunities for advancing human rights, including the need for countries to develop their own business and human rights frameworks, tailored to their specific regional context rather than simply transposing European models. They emphasized the importance of regionalizing efforts and ensuring that Indigenous Peoples were adequately considered in policy decisions. The session concluded with a call for better implementation of laws, increased political will and strengthened frameworks to protect human rights in the region.

E. Middle Eastern and North African States

49. Speakers in the session focused on the challenges and opportunities of advancing business and human rights in the region, with a particular emphasis on the roles of various stakeholders. Speakers discussed the need for stronger policies and frameworks to align national laws with international human rights standards, such as the Guiding Principles, and the importance of fostering inclusive workplaces, in particular for women and marginalized groups. They identified persistent gaps in human rights, particularly around enforcement mechanisms, private sector engagement and human rights education. Speakers emphasized the importance of cross-sector collaboration, including public-private partnerships, capacity-building for businesses and States, and greater transparency in supply chains to enhance human rights due diligence and improve workers' rights. The participants in the discussion also stressed the importance of clear national action plans and legislative frameworks on business and human rights aligned with international human rights standards. They underscored the need, moving forward, to expand human rights education beyond law faculties and create inclusive, sustainable policies that integrated both environmental and human rights concerns, especially in high-risk sectors such as extractives, construction and agriculture.

F. Western European and other States

50. The participants in the session examined key developments in the business and human rights agenda across Western European and other States, focusing on national and regional policy advancements, including updates to national action plans and the implementation of Directive (EU) 2024/1760. Participants underscored the importance of stakeholder engagement, mandatory due diligence and harmonized enforcement mechanisms across European Union member States, while also highlighting concerns over compliance burdens, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. One speaker addressed the updated national action plan of Switzerland, which incorporated measures on artificial intelligence and human rights due diligence. Another speaker presented the national action plan of the United States of America, which prioritized responsible business conduct through procurement policies, access to remedies and global supply chain standards. There was broad support for civil liability mechanisms to strengthen accountability, although some speakers cautioned against regulatory duplication that could hinder compliance. Speakers called for more comprehensive frameworks, such as Directive (EU) 2024/1760, to drive structural change. Good practices highlighted included the introduction by Switzerland of reporting requirements relating to child labour and conflict minerals, the Advisory Committee on Responsible Business Conduct of the United States of America, and corporate due diligence frameworks. Participants emphasized the importance of strengthening partnerships between businesses, Governments and civil society, streamlining compliance guidance, ensuring consistent regulatory oversight and enhancing access to remedies through simplified complaint mechanisms. There was consensus on the importance of trust-based supplier relationships, transparency and engagement as essential tools for mitigating risks and promoting responsible business conduct globally.

VI. Snapshot series

51. The Forum included four snapshot series. Each series consisted of a group of three to seven short presentations on a specific common theme.

A. Snapshot series on groups at risk

52. The speakers in the snapshot series on groups at risk explored the intersections of business activities with groups and sectors at heightened risk of vulnerability and marginalization, shedding light on critical challenges and potential solutions. One snapshot was focused on legal empowerment and access to justice for communities affected by the energy transition, with speakers advocating for decolonization, decarbonization and decentralization to ensure a fair transition. Another snapshot examined child labour in the agricultural sector, particularly in cocoa production, with speakers assessing the effectiveness of voluntary and mandatory measures such as child labour monitoring and remediation systems in global supply chains. In a dedicated snapshot on sexual and reproductive health, speakers emphasized the role of businesses in advancing workplace policies that supported women's rights, discussing the United Nations Population Fund-led Coalition for Reproductive Justice in Business. The speakers in the series also highlighted grass-roots efforts in African diamond-mining communities, where affected populations had sought redress through government authorities, courts and grievance mechanisms, offering insights into challenges to access to remedy and corporate accountability. The human rights risks related to critical minerals mining were also explored, with speakers from Africa and Latin America stressing the need for coordinated global action to protect Indigenous communities. Another snapshot addressed financial institutions' role with regard to human rights, showcasing the Human Rights Toolkit for Financial Institutions of the United Nations Environment Programme as a tool to guide banks in policy development, due diligence and grievance mechanisms. Lastly, there was also a snapshot on caste-based discrimination in global supply chains, in which speakers underscored the hidden vulnerabilities of communities discriminated against in the context of work on the basis of descent, calling for a smart mix of voluntary and mandatory measures to integrate their protection into business and human rights frameworks. Collectively, the speakers in the snapshot series underscored the necessity of tailored legal, regulatory and corporate strategies to safeguard groups and sectors at heightened risk of vulnerability and marginalization and foster inclusive economic systems.

B. Snapshot series on practical approaches and tools on human rights due diligence for business

53. The speakers in the snapshot series on practical approaches and tools on human rights due diligence explored innovative methods and frameworks to strengthen corporate accountability and responsible business conduct. One snapshot highlighted the critical role of grievance mechanisms in corporate risk management, with speakers emphasizing accessibility and effective case handling through multi-stakeholder collaboration. As part of another snapshot, legal tools such as the Impact Term Sheet and Impact Card, developed to integrate stakeholder due diligence into governance structures, making human rights due diligence more tangible for businesses, were discussed. The series also featured the launch of the Taskforce on Inequality and Social-related Financial Disclosures, a global initiative aimed at guiding businesses and financial institutions in measuring and reporting social impacts. A snapshot on sustainable business models showcased an approach to radical transparency in the diamond supply chain, using technology and local capacity-building to enhance accountability. The integration of human rights due diligence into renewable energy projects was another key focus in one of the snapshots, with speakers addressing the need for regulatory mandates and voluntary frameworks to mitigate human rights risks, particularly for workers at heightened risk of vulnerability and Indigenous communities. The European Model Clauses, a set of contractual tools designed to align with Directive (EU) 2024/1760 and promote responsible contracting practices in supply chains, were also discussed. Lastly,

one snapshot was focused on the Converged Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence Assessment Tool, developed collaboratively to streamline human rights due diligence assessments and foster continuous improvement in corporate supply chains. Overall, speakers underscored the importance of practical tools, legal innovations and multi-stakeholder engagement in advancing effective human rights due diligence implementation across industries.

C. Snapshot series on stakeholder engagement

54. The speakers in the snapshot series on stakeholder engagement explored effective strategies for meaningful involvement by rights holders in corporate human rights practices, emphasizing transparency, trust-building and accountability. Discussions highlighted gaps in migrant workers' access to remedies in the Nordic and Baltic regions, addressing legal and structural barriers and the role of civil society in strengthening grievance mechanisms. With regard to the agricultural sector, in one snapshot, multi-stakeholder initiatives were presented as being key to driving systemic change through a combination of regulatory and voluntary measures, with a case study on European food supply chains underscoring the need for stronger corporate accountability, particularly for women farmworkers. In addition, one snapshot was focused on the renewable energy transition through the lens of business responsibility, trade union participation and fair negotiations to prevent labour abuses in extractive industries. One snapshot involved discussion of the "fourth pillar" initiative, with speakers advocating for greater community agency in business and human rights governance to address power imbalances and enhance accountability. Another snapshot was focused on the corporate landscape of Japan, as part of which cultural and legal barriers to stakeholder engagement were analysed, and pathways for improving dialogue between businesses and civil society were explored. Across the series, speakers reinforced the importance of sustained collaboration, equitable engagement, and practical mechanisms to ensure that human rights considerations were embedded in corporate decision-making and operations.

D. Snapshot series on other relevant topics of the business and human rights agenda

55. The speakers in the snapshot series on other relevant topics of the business and human rights agenda explored critical and emerging areas where business activities intersected with human rights, emphasizing the role of education, litigation and sports governance in advancing responsible business practices. One snapshot was focused on business and human rights education and capacity-building, highlighting the need for customized, skills-based learning programmes that went beyond conventional human rights curricula to address the unique interdisciplinary nature of business and human rights. In one snapshot, speakers examined the role of litigation in enforcing business and human rights standards, weighing up the advantages and limitations of judicial and non-judicial mechanisms and the role of lawyers in ensuring access to meaningful remedies. The series also included a snapshot on the world of sports, where the Guiding Principles had become the guiding framework for large-scale events. As a case study, speakers discussed the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) European Football Championship 2024 in Germany. They evaluated the effectiveness of human rights due diligence measures, including the establishment of a human rights advisory board and grievance mechanism. Overall, speakers across the snapshot series highlighted the importance of robust legal frameworks, educational initiatives and industry-specific human rights strategies in fostering accountability and ensuring that human rights considerations remained central to corporate and institutional decision-making.

VII. Key messages and takeaways

56. **The key messages emerging from the discussions included those set out below.**

57. **While awareness of business responsibilities to respect human rights grows, including through embedding human rights due diligence in business practice,**

significant challenges remain. Achieving real progress requires ongoing commitment from both States and businesses to address gaps and drive lasting change.

58. States play a crucial role in ensuring human rights compliance through a smart mix of measures. However, translating commitments into action remains difficult. Strengthening engagement with stakeholders is essential to ensure effective regulation and implementation.

59. Strong multi-stakeholder cooperation is key for the implementation of the Guiding Principles. Businesses need to integrate human rights into their activities effectively, with the right tools, knowledge and commitment, supported by effective participation by rights holders and multi-stakeholder partnerships, which can enhance human rights due diligence practices and strengthen the prevention of human rights abuses.

60. Businesses must establish effective grievance mechanisms aligned with the Guiding Principles. Embedding a gender-sensitive approach ensures fairness, accountability and equal access to justice and to an effective remedy, particularly for those at heightened risk of human rights abuses.

61. Indigenous communities continue to face significant violations and abuses in the context of business activities, including land dispossession, environmental degradation and the repression of Indigenous human rights defenders. This requires more decisive action by States and businesses, including to protect and respect land rights, and free, prior and informed consent guarantees.

62. A fair and inclusive energy transition depends on effective corporate accountability and protection and respect for human rights, including cultural and collective rights. The upholding of participation rights by States and businesses is crucial, as are community-led solutions that can lead to equitable distribution of benefits, while preventing exploitative practices.

63. Protecting individuals and groups, especially the most marginalized, who are at heightened risk of human rights abuses, such as Indigenous Peoples, communities of African descent, human rights defenders, women, LGBTI+ persons, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, requires a smart mix of mandatory and voluntary measures, including legally binding regulation, stronger remedial and grievance mechanisms, collaboration and meaningful engagement with affected communities.

64. Strengthening access to remedy requires providing affected communities with free legal aid, awareness and institutional support. Strengthening both judicial and non-judicial pathways is essential for ensuring accountability and effective remedy.
