

Contribution to your work

Krista Hendry

Dear Esteemed members of the UN Working Group,

First congratulations to you all! I look forward to supporting your work however I can.

I would like to ask you to give the issue of security appropriate attention. Most of the human rights abuses that have occurred in respect to the extractive industry, the sector with which Fund for Peace has the most involvement for exactly this reason, are related not as much directly to company behavior as to the behavior of public security forces. You all will be aware of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPs).

The VPs provide guidance to companies operating in zones of conflict or fragile states so t hey can ensure that security forces – public or private – protecting the companies' facilities and premises operate in a way that protects the company's assets while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. As too few people are aware, however, this initiative was the original concept of industry, as they needed support from the other sectors in order to have discussions, for example, with local governments about the need for greater human rights training and proper vetting of their security forces.

The VPs cannot be seen as merely something that companies need to implement as part of their human rights performance, but as something that governments need to adopt and implement as well. It is my hope that given the nature of your work and being advisors to the UN, you will be able to help increase government support for the ideals of the Voluntary Principles with work on their own security sectors while also encouraging more companies to implement them.

Look forward to discussing this issue with you all further.

Best Regards,
Krista

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