



Bogotá, December 7th, 2011

To the
 UN Working Group
 on Human Rights and Transnational Corporations
 and Other Business Enterprises
 Geneva

Respected Working Group,

Colombia Guidelines on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (hereinafter *Guías Colombia*)¹ is a multi-stake holder initiative that brings together business, civil society organizations and the Colombian government. All those who participate in *Guías Colombia* share the purpose of defining, promoting and adopting clear patterns and standards pertaining to Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law for business operations in complex scenarios like contemporary Colombia. This initiative began in late 2006, when it was envisioned as a working group on Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights for the non-extractive sector. In 2009, due to both national needs and international advances in the business and human rights field, *Guías Colombia* was revisited and envisioned as a broader initiative. Today it encompasses a wider scope of topics pertaining to business and human rights, as well as topics linked to business and international humanitarian law. Also, it involves both extractive and non-extractive companies. These days, members of *Guías Colombia* are devoted to the development, promotion and implementation of guidance notes on particularly sensitive issues in contemporary Colombia such as: security, grievance mechanisms, labour issues, institutional strengthening, business-communities relations, transparency, and environmental issues.

¹ For more information please visit: www.ideaspaz.org

Current members of Guías Colombia include: 9 companies that operate in the country², the biggest business association in Colombia³, 4 Civil Society Organizations⁴, and both the Vice-president's office and the Presidential Human Rights Program. Additionally, national NGO's such as CODHES and international organizations such as the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) have expressed their interest in becoming active members of this initiative and are in the process of formalizing such interest.

Responding to your invitation sent on November 4th, 2011 ("Have your say"), the members of Guías Colombia have identified a series of questions and key points that you might want to address in fulfilling the priorities and activities included in the A/HRC/RES/17/4 resolution. The following questions might help in advancing on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles at both national and local levels:

1. ¿What does imply seeking to implement the UN Guiding Principles in complex scenarios like contemporary Colombia? ¿What opportunities, obstacles, challenges and dilemmas will companies and States face in seeking to implement them?

2. ¿How companies and governments should/could engage in order to actually implement the UN Guiding Principles? ¿How much should/could be mandatory and how much should/could be left as part of voluntary initiatives? ¿What public-private alliances should/could be established in order to advance in such implementation?

3. ¿What do the UN Guiding Principles mean to different size companies? ¿How to engaged middle size and small companies in this process? ¿What do the UN

² ECOPETROL, EPM, Tipiel, Coca-Cola, Nestlé, ISAGEN, Palmares, Indupalma and Anglogold Ashanti.

³ Colombia's Business Association (ANDI)

⁴ International Alert, International Business Leader Forum (IBLF), Red Pacto Global Colombia and Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP).

Guiding Principles mean to different economic sectors? ¿How to engage those economic sectors that have historically remained outside the loop or at the peripheries of the business and human rights field?

4. ¿What should/could be the role of multi-stakeholder initiatives in the process of implementing the UN Guiding Principles in a context like the Colombian one? ¿What should/could be the role of civil society organizations in this process? ¿What should/could be the role of business associations in that same process?

We celebrate the conformation of this UN Working Group, and would like to engage actively with the work that it will develop. We expect it will be enlightening for the work we have been conducting in the business and human rights field in Colombia.

We would like to participate in the First Annual UN Forum on Business and Human Rights. Please let us know when will you organize it, what modalities of participation do you envision and how should we proceed in order to participate and attend to it.

We wish you the best of luck in this tough but exciting journey you have ahead.

Warm Regards,

Guías Colombia



AGROPECUARIA LOS CAIMANES S.A.