

[National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights must provide protection for human rights defenders](#)

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(Geneva) - National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights should be developed in close consultation with civil society organisations and should detail the steps and measures that a State will take to protect human rights defenders from attacks, restrictions and reprisals associated with their work on corporate accountability.

In a [statement to the UN's Working Group on Business and Human Rights](#), ISHR drew attention to a disturbing global pattern of attacks against human rights defenders who protest against business operations and called on States to ensure that defenders are able to undertake such activities in a safe and enabling environment.

'The design and implementation of National Action Plans on business and human rights provide an opportunity for States to recognise the crucial role of human rights defenders in promoting corporate respect for human rights and corporate accountability for human rights violations,' said ISHR Director Phil Lynch.

The UN Working Group is conducting an open consultation on the 'strategic elements of National Action Plans'. In its statement to the consultation, ISHR singled out the [United Kingdom's Plan as an example of good practice](#).

'ISHR welcomes the UK's National Action Plan and, in particular, the commitments therein to provide financial support to civil society organisations to promote the protection of human rights defenders working on issues of corporate accountability and to instruct the UK's embassies and high commissions to provide support and protection to defenders at risk,' Mr Lynch said.

With the UN Human Rights Council set to consider the issue of human rights defenders at its 25th session in March and that of business and human rights at its 26th session in June, [ISHR is calling on States](#) to develop and implement National Action Plans on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights which include policies and measures to protect and support human rights defenders in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

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