

You are cordially invited to an interactive discussion on

Human rights defenders working on corporate accountability

How can the Human Rights Council contribute to their protection?

Friday, 31 May 2013 – 13:15 to 14:45 - Palais des Nations, Room XXIII

In its report to the Human Rights Council's 23rd session, the Working Group on business and human rights noted 'that conflicts between communities and businesses had led to the harassment and persecution of human rights defenders investigating, protesting, seeking accountability and access to remedies for victims of alleged abuses linked to business activities.'

The Working Group recommends that States protect human rights defenders from persecution and harassment, and that businesses find ways of better cooperating with human rights defenders and not weaken or undermine their work.

Faced with the increasing recognition of the importance of human rights defenders in preventing business related human rights abuses, and ensuring corporate accountability for human rights violations, the Human Rights Council must take action. The 23rd session of the Council provides a key opportunity to discuss the landmark resolution on how the protection of human rights defenders applies to the specific challenges and threats faced by human rights defenders working on corporate accountability. This interactive discussion, featuring both human rights experts and human rights defenders, aims to assist the Council to develop an adequate and effective response.

The panel will be moderated by Phil Lynch, Director of the International Service for Human Rights. Panellists will respond to questions from the audience, together with questions submitted via [Twitter using #HRDs](#).

Discussants

- Ms Sapna Malik, Partner at Leigh Day
- Mr Clement Voulé, member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights working group on extractive industries and human rights
- Ms Lene Wendland, Adviser on Business and Human Rights, OHCHR
- Mr Gerald Staberock, Secretary-General, World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)