

Request for input for the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights' country visit to Azerbaijan

The UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights will conduct an official country mission to the Republic of Azerbaijan from 18 to 27 August 2014.

During the visit, the Working Group will examine business and human rights issues on the ground and identify current initiatives, practices, challenges and opportunities in the country's implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, including by the Government and corporations.

The Working Group will aim to meet with Government authorities and business enterprises, as well as communities and individuals affected by business and human rights issues including civil society organisations, victims of corporate-related abuses, the national human rights institution, international and local NGOs, development partners, trade unions, and the academic community. Following the mission, the Working Group will prepare a report with its observations and recommendations to the Government of Azerbaijan and the UN Human Rights Council.

The Working Group kindly requests concrete suggestions on the salient issues to examine and relevant stakeholders to meet with during its visit, such as:

1. Key Government ministries/institutions/parliamentarians that it would be useful for the Working Group to meet with.

2. Important business enterprises that the Working Group should aim to examine, such as:

- *Business enterprises that are owned or controlled by the State, or that receive substantial support and services from State agencies.*
- *Transnational corporations operating or headquartered in Azerbaijan.*
- *Small and medium sized enterprises.*
- *Businesses that operate in the informal economy.*

3. Other relevant stakeholders that the Working Group should aim to meet with, such as:

- *Civil society organizations working on human rights issues related to business activities.*
- *Representatives of business enterprises.*
- *Trade unions.*
- *Business associations / chambers of commerce.*
- *Independent research institutions.*
- *Communities affected by business operations.*
- *Human rights defenders.*

4. Focus areas for the mission (with brief explanatory background information):

- *What specific business and human rights issues should be looked into?*
- *Which business sectors - established or emerging - should be examined?*
- *Are there any populations particularly affected by business and human rights issues in the country?*
- *Are there any relevant business and human rights cases that the Working Group should look into?*

- *What gaps in laws, regulations and policies exist that are relevant to the business and human rights agenda?*
- *Are there any policies, activities or programmes to ensure human rights protection and remediation that could serve as a model for others?*

5. Visits outside Baku. The Working Group will begin and end its trip in Baku, but it is able to travel across the country in between for shorter field visits:

- *Which regions, municipalities, urban centres or rural areas should the Working Group aim to visit and why?*
- *Are there any particular vulnerable groups that the Working Group should try to meet with?*

6. Background materials and reports:

- *Please provide documents or background materials that would be instructive for the Working Group to review prior to its mission.*

Thank you very much in advance for your advice and assistance. Please kindly email suggestions ASAP to: wg-business@ohchr.org

For further information about the mandate and work of the Working Group, please visit:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Pages/WGHRandtransnationalcorporationsandotherbusiness.aspx>