

**For Immediate Release:** Monday, June 30, 2014

**Contact:** Meredith MacKenzie, [meredith@westendstrategy.com](mailto:meredith@westendstrategy.com), +1.202.427.2007

## **Major New Report Outlines How Governments Can Put Corporate Responsibility for Human Rights in Motion**

WASHINGTON – As the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva prepares to take new actions on the question of how to make businesses more accountable for their human rights impacts, [a major report](#) released Monday gives guidance on what governments themselves should do to promote better corporate human rights practices.

The report is the result of a joint project of the International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR), a U.S.-based coalition of organizations working to ensure corporate respect for human rights, and the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), Denmark's national human rights institution.

“This report establishes new guidelines to help national leaders and administrations integrate respect for human rights into corporate cultures,” said Amol Mehra, Director of ICAR. “The report reflects insights from hundreds of experts so that governments and other organizations can learn what works, and what doesn’t. The goal of the report is for the public and private sectors, no matter the country, to work together to protect human rights.”

“How to make our economies more sustainable is the question of our time. Bringing corporate conduct in line with people’s human rights is a critical part of that. This report signals a significant step forward in understanding how governments can and should follow through on the commitments they have made to secure that goal,” said Claire Methven O’Brien, Special Adviser at DIHR. “There’s great interest in this report and the tools it provides, both from governments and civil society, and we’re already engaging with a range of organizations who plan to use the report to promote dialogue and policy reform in their own countries.”

“Our project identified a strong consensus across world regions and across stakeholder groups: people want their governments to step up to the plate and implement commitments made on corporate accountability for human rights,” said Mehra. “And they see an inclusive national process, involving businesses along with civil society organizations, affected communities, and other governments, as the best way of securing that goal.”

- END -

### **Notes for Editors**

1. The ICAR-DIHR report is entitled *National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights: A Toolkit for the Development, Implementation, and Review of State*

*Commitments to Business and Human Rights Frameworks*. The report can be found here: <http://accountabilityroundtable.org/analysis/napsreport/>

The report lays out guidelines, recommendations, and interactive tools that both government and non-governmental actors may use or draw inspiration from when working on a country's National Action Plan (NAP) on business and human rights.

2. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2011, are the world's first global framework addressing the responsibility of corporations for human rights impacts. The UNGPs can be found here: [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf)

Since 2011, there has been scant progress by most UN Member States to implement the UNGPs. To date, only three countries have developed and published NAPs on business and human rights (Denmark, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom). The European Union formally requested all of its Member States to develop business and human rights NAPs by the end of 2013.

3. In developing this report, ICAR and DIHR undertook a global program of consultation with nearly 300 representatives of governments, civil society, businesses, investors, academia, national human rights institutions, and regional and international organizations. Consultations were held in Brussels, Belgium; Accra, Ghana; Bogotá, Colombia; London, United Kingdom; and New Delhi, India between October 2013 and April 2014. Summaries of these consultations, and all other project materials, can be found here: <http://www.business-humanrights.org/Documents/icar-dihr-naps-project>
4. On June 27, 2014, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on business and human rights, in which it calls on States to produce business and human rights NAPs and for the development of NAPs guidance. The resolution can be found here: [http://www.norway-geneva.org/EFTA1/Statements/26th-Session-of-the-Human-Rights-Council/Item-3-Promotion-and-protection-of-human-rights/Business-and-Human-Rights-Resolution-/#.U7F\\_ZvldWjK](http://www.norway-geneva.org/EFTA1/Statements/26th-Session-of-the-Human-Rights-Council/Item-3-Promotion-and-protection-of-human-rights/Business-and-Human-Rights-Resolution-/#.U7F_ZvldWjK)
5. On June 26, 2014, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a controversial resolution establishing a new inter-governmental Working Group to consider the development of binding international legal standards on human rights and transnational corporations. The resolution can be found here: [http://www.business-humanrights.org/Documents/Legally\\_Binding\\_Instrument\\_Business\\_Human\\_Rights](http://www.business-humanrights.org/Documents/Legally_Binding_Instrument_Business_Human_Rights)

#### **Available for Interview:**

Amol Mehra, Director, ICAR, [amol@accountabilityroundtable.org](mailto:amol@accountabilityroundtable.org)

Claire Methven O'Brien, Chief Adviser, DIHR, [cob@humanrights.dk](mailto:cob@humanrights.dk)

Sara Blackwell, Legal and Policy Associate, ICAR, [sara@accountabilityroundtable.org](mailto:sara@accountabilityroundtable.org)

Cathrine Bloch Poulsen-Hansen, Adviser, DIHR, [cph@humanrights.dk](mailto:cph@humanrights.dk)