



## Global leadership group to advise on business and human rights

UN Secretary-General's special representative convenes global leaders with wide experience in government, business and human rights advocacy

**Geneva and New York, 22 September 2008:** John Ruggie, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative for business and human rights, today announced that he is convening a leadership group to advise him on how best to ensure that businesses worldwide respect internationally recognized human rights standards.

The panel includes Ban's predecessor as Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, as well as Mary Robinson, the former President of Ireland who also served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. They are joined by thirteen other leaders from business, diplomacy, and civil society around the world (listed below).

Ruggie, a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government who served as Annan's strategic adviser from 1997-2001, has been Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for business and human rights since 2005. Earlier this year, after extensive consultations with business, governments and non-profit human rights groups on five continents, he completed the first phase of his mandate by proposing a broad policy framework for business and human rights, based on three core principles: the state's duty to **protect** against human rights abuses by third parties, including business; the responsibility of corporations to **respect** human rights; and the need for victims of corporate-related human rights abuses to have easier access to more effective **remedies**.

In June the UN Human Rights Council gave the framework a unanimous welcome and extended Ruggie's mandate for a further three years, asking him to "build on" and "promote" the framework and to provide concrete guidance for states, businesses, and other social actors on each of its three principles. The new leadership group will provide both substantive and strategic advice. While its members are drawn from different sectors of society and different regions of the world, they are expected to contribute their expertise in a personal capacity rather than as representatives of any organization or constituency. They will not be asked to endorse or be bound by Ruggie's submissions to the Human Rights Council, or any other recommendations he may make. These will be his responsibility alone.

As well as working with the panel, Ruggie will continue to consult with a wide range of stakeholders, notably through meetings and workshops in different regions, ensuring that all viewpoints are heard in the further elaboration of the "protect, respect, remedy" framework.

On announcing the panel's formation, Ruggie said: "I am honored and immensely grateful to have such an esteemed, experienced, and diverse group of thought-leaders engaged in this critical effort to achieve better protection of human rights with regard to business activity."

Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, a panel member, said: "I am delighted to support this important mandate. Business, government, and civil society all have critical roles to play in making globalization equitable and socially sustainable. John's innovative approach and his emphasis on practical solutions will help us reach that goal."

Panelists are as follows (their full biographies are available on the SRSG's web portal at <http://www.business-humanrights.org/Gettingstarted/UNSpecialRepresentative>:

**Kofi Annan** (Ghana), former Secretary-General of the United Nations

**Souhayr Belhassen** (Tunisia), President, Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme

**John Browne** (UK), Managing Director of Riverstone Holdings LLC; former Group Chief Executive of BP plc

**Maria Livanos Cattai** (Switzerland), member of the Board of Directors, Petroplus Holdings AG; former Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce

**Stuart Eizenstat** (USA), Partner, Covington & Burling LLP; former U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, Under Secretary of State, Under Secretary of Commerce, Ambassador to the European Union

**Luis Gallegos** (Ecuador), Ambassador of Ecuador to the United States; former Vice-Chair, UN Commission on Human Rights; Member of the UN Committee against Torture

**Neville Isdell** (USA), Chairman of the Board of Directors, The Coca-Cola Company (will join the panel in April 2009)

**Hina Jilani** (Pakistan), Member of the Council, Pakistan Human Rights Commission; former UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders

**Kishore Mahbubani** (Singapore), Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore; former Ambassador of Singapore to the United Nations

**Narayana Murthy** (India), Chairman, Infosys Technologies Limited

**Sonia Picado** (Costa Rica), Chair, Inter-American Institute of Human Rights; former Judge and Vice-Chair of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

**Cyril Ramaphosa** (South Africa), Executive Chairman, Shanduka Group; former Secretary General of the African National Congress

**Mary Robinson** (Ireland), Chair, Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative; former President of Ireland and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

**Guy Ryder** (UK), General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation

**Marjorie Yang** (China), Chairman of Esquel Group.

**John Ruggie** is Kirkpatrick Professor of International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and Affiliated Professor in International Legal Studies at Harvard Law School. From 1997-2001 he served as United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Planning.

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## **Q&A:**

### **What is the purpose of the Leadership Group?**

The group has been convened to provide the SRSG with substantive and strategic advice on his mandate to “operationalize” the “protect, respect, and remedy” framework that he proposed to the Human Rights Council, and which the Council has “welcomed.” The mandate concludes in 2011.

### **Will the Leadership Group replace other forms of consultation by the SRSG?**

The SRSG will continue the broad program of outreach and extensive consultations that characterized the first phase of his mandate, with all documentation posted on his website hosted by the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (<http://www.business-humanrights.org/Gettingstarted/UNSpecialRepresentative>).

### **How were the members of the Leadership Group selected?**

Members of the group were invited for their personal expertise, with the intent of convening a panel representative of a broad range of sectoral and geographic experiences.

### **Will the Leadership Group be asked to endorse the SRSG’s proposals?**

Members of the Leadership Group are not expected to reach consensus or endorse the SRSG’s recommendations to the Human Rights Council, which are his responsibility alone. Of course, they are welcome to promote the SRSG’s proposals, individually and/or collectively, if they choose to do so.

### **Will the members of the Leadership Group represent their organizations or constituencies?**

No. Members are participating in their personal capacity.

### **Is the Leadership Group an official UN entity?**

No. It is an informal advisory group.

### **Will meetings of the Leadership Group be public?**

No. In keeping with its purpose, the group will provide the SRSG with informal advice on an ongoing basis.

### **How are the Leadership Group and the SRSG’s mandate funded? Will Leadership Group members be paid for their participation?**

Like all UN Special Procedures, the SRSG for business and human rights is provided very limited resources from the UN; his mandate is supported through voluntary contributions from UN member states. Members of the Leadership Group are participating pro bono.