NETWORK DESCRIPTION

1. NETWORK NAME

Network on Business, Conflict and Human Rights (BCHR.net)

2. JUSTIFICATION

Current research from a number of disciplines and perspectives increasingly examines how companies from various sectors have played significant roles in armed conflicts and systematic state repression of human rights around the world. There is nonetheless a lack of transdisciplinary research projects that are able to embrace the complexity of the connections between range of actors involved and the dynamics of such conflict and repression.

Research projects at the intersection of different disciplines are needed to better understand the different possible forms of business implication in settings of conflict and systematic repression, each actor's range of involvement and the factors that positively or negatively influence prevention and accountability efforts. Such projects are also an appropriate vehicle for informing the emergence of interconnected economic, legal and policy frameworks that allow for more comprehensive responses and solutions.

3. AIM

The Network will bring together researchers, practitioners and NGO members from various fields with the aim of researching and analysing the role of business in conflict situations reducing the human and people's rights violations and any other negative social and environmental impact as well as other adverse consequences. It will also look at the potential role of companies in relation to peace building.

The Network will reflect upon the causes, dynamics and consequences of business involvement in armed conflicts and systematic state repression, as well as upon existing or potential responses to

such involvements in light of the responsibilities of all concerned actors and ongoing international and local efforts to develop and apply appropriate initiatives and guidelines.

4. MAIN NETWORK ACTIVITIES

There are five main Network activities:

a. To hold a periodic Network meeting;

b. To share information and pertinent work products through a website by providing information to one another and to the general public about the ongoing work and members' expertise. It will focus on the dissemination of research outputs, research work and other complementary resources.

c. To encourage and support joint research projects among members and/or in collaboration with other organizations; and facilitate and promote individual research projects undertaken by its members.

d. The Network may also carry out other activities such as the organization of conferences, events, courses or seminars and publications at its own initiative or on request.

Additionally, the Network may participate in the development of the activities of other institutions and/ or organizations that appear to be aligned with its own objectives. Nevertheless, the Network is not funding other organisations.

5. MAIN RESEARCH AREAS

The research of Network members will be divided into two primary areas: *thematic* and *instrumental*. These areas will be subject to widening as the research agenda of the Network develops, as agreed by its members at the annual meeting. These research areas might have a local, regional, national or global focus and might include but are not limited to the following:

A- *Thematic areas*: The role and responsibilities of companies in conflict situations

1. **Business involvement in conflicts and systematic repression**

    - 1.1. Conflict and repression financing
    - 1.2. The arms market and illicit trade
    - 1.3. Access and exploitation of natural resources
    - 1.4. Private and military and security companies

2. **Accountability and interaction of companies with governments**

    - 2.1. Voluntary frameworks
    - 2.2. Civil, administrative and criminal liability in national and supranational legal systems
    - 2.3. Interaction between regulatory systems
    - 2.4. Due diligence in conflict and repression situations
    - 2.5. International sanctions and embargoes
    - 2.6. The works towards a binding treaty

3. **The role of business in peace-building and human rights**

- 3.1. Building international guidelines through case studies
- 3.2. Public-private partnerships: limits and opportunities
- 3.3. Fostering the role of domestic business communities

B- *Instrumental areas:* Fostering the interplay between regimes and actors

4. Sharing methodologies

- 4.1.Fostering field-based evidence on a common basis
- 4.2. Improving synergies in fact-finding, evidence collection and analysis

5. Fostering partnerships

- 5.1. Searching for other initiatives to facilitate cross-fertilisation
- 5.2. Seeking collaboration from researchers/centres in emerging countries
- 5.3. Fostering links with other Networks that focus on complementary levels of analysis
- 5.4. Bringing the academic and NGO communities and policy officials together to perform case studies on a worldwide scale
- 5.5. Development of new common projects

6. MEMBERSHIP

Network membership will be limited exclusively to institutions and organisations (independent research centres, university departments or centres, and NGOs involved in specialist research) as well as individual researchers and independent experts who can demonstrate that s/he works on topics related to the core research areas of the Network. For the purpose of membership, experts are those who generate primary research and specialist analysis who wish to share it with other experts, whether that research or specialist analysis is on a particular geographical location, business actors or thematic issue of relevance to protecting the rule of law and human rights.

In the case of members belonging to a particular institution or organization, a written request to participate in the Network will be required with the name of the expert representing the institution. Several members of a single institution may be also members of the Network on an individual basis, but the institution must clarify which member is its official representative.

State representatives may act as observers after approval of their status at the annual meeting and may participate and attend particular sessions at the annual meeting.

Before the first annual meeting, the institutions and/ or individuals who wish to form a part of the Network should send their request to the Interim Advisory Committee. Afterwards, the requests should be sent to the elected Advisory Board.

Once the application is received, the Interim Advisory Committee (or the Advisory Board) will report positively on applications that are consistent with the Network objectives and criteria. The acceptance of new members must be confirmed by the members attending the annual meeting.

Members are entitled to:
a. Participate in the annual meeting with an equal voice and vote;
b. Be informed about the development of the activity of the Network and take part in activities of interest;
c. Make suggestions to the annual meeting and / or the Advisory Board.

Members are expected to:
   a. Cooperate with the Network to achieve its objectives and, where appropriate, identify themselves publicly as affiliated with the Network;
   b. Participate in the activities of at least one working group;
   c. Share, as much as possible, the results of their research related to the Network activities;
   d. Attend the annual meetings of the Network.

7. WORKING GROUPS

The Network can create standing Working Groups at the request of a minimum number of members, according to the procedure to be determined at the Network's first annual meeting. Each group will have at least one coordinator and it will necessarily need to be integrated by various profiles. The group should refer to a specific issue within one of the Network working areas referred to in paragraph 5 or a related issue. The group may promote specific joint projects or joint activities, seeking, whenever appropriate, the necessary funding in a transparent manner. The groups will be open to additional membership from other Network members. Members can belong to more than one Group. The Groups will report on their activities at the annual meeting and, as far as possible, through the web page. The Groups will meet once a year in person during the annual meeting.

8. GOVERNING BODIES AND OPERATING RULES

The governing bodies of the Network are:

- **Advisory Board**

During the first annual meeting an Advisory Board shall be elected whose members shall have a mandate of two years, renewable, with half of the members being elected annually (and with half the members receiving an exceptional 3-year mandate at the Assembly's inaugural session). The composition and the description of the tasks of the Advisory Board shall be determined by the members at its first session. In selecting the members of the Advisory Board, the members must promote geographic and thematic diversity as well as gender balance. It should also take into account a balance between institutions and individual experts and between faculty members and NGO representatives.

An Interim Advisory Committee will follow-up the organisation of the first annual meeting.
This committee is composed of:
   - Bruce Broomhall
   - Olga Martín-Ortega
   - Antoni Pigrau
   - Maria Prandi
   - Anita Ramasastry
   - Penelope Simons
   - Mark Taylor
   - Brian Wood

- **The Annual meeting**

The annual meeting, composed of all members, is the main decision-making body. The Network will hold an annual meeting with the participation of all its members. Costs related to the participation in the annual meeting are to be borne by each of the participating members without prejudice to

external funds that may be requested by the Interim Advisory Committee or the Advisory Board for its general organisation.

Resolutions for the annual meeting shall be proposed at least two months in advance and adopted by consensus if possible or, in all other cases, by a simple majority of the voting members present or represented at the meeting.

It is expected that the first meeting of the Network will be held in Geneva at the end of 2015. This meeting will endorse the constitution of Network.

The annual meeting must ensure the following:
   a. Share the progress/ results/publications relating to the research carried out by its members in the areas of study of the Network, especially new research and analysis;
   b. Suggest and advise on the development of the ongoing research activities at the request of any member;
   c. Inform about the development of other research work of interest to the Network;
   d. Discuss and determine the activities of the Network;
   e. Suggest sources of funding for the Network management or its activities;
   f. Elect the members of the Advisory Board;
   g. Approve the creation of new Working Groups; receive the reports / affirm or modify the mandates of existing Working Groups
   h. Establish and modify the procedure for the creation of working groups that are considered relevant;
   i. Consider and approve membership applications;
   j. Suggest the involvement/coordination of the Network's activities with other Networks or initiatives relevant to the objectives of the Network;
   k. Suggest efficient mechanisms for the dissemination of the Network results and works;
   l. Designate allocation for its annual meeting;
   m. Establish clear rules about the use of the name and logo of the Network based upon the general aim of the Network and other functions outlined above and on principles encouraging the inclusion and equality of the membership. It will be clearly established that the public statements of the Network's members are their own.
   n. Elect the members of the Secretariat
   o. Any other functions necessary to achieve the objectives of the Network.

- **Secretariat (Interim Secretariat)**

The Secretariat will operationalize the Advisory Board functions. The interim Secretariat, which will be led by ICIP, will be in charge of the launch of the Network website as well as the organisation of the first annual meeting in Geneva (November 2015).

9. WEBSITE AND NETWORK VISIBILITY

The Network will not take a public stand on any current event.

The public presence of the Network and the use of its name and logo will be managed in accordance with the criteria adopted at the annual meeting.

As soon as possible, and when adequate funding is available, a website as well as a dissemination strategy of the Network will be put in place (e-newsletter).

10. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The funds expected for the development of the activities of the Network are:
- An individual or institutional fee (to be discussed at the first annual meeting);
- Grants that the Network and its Working Groups could receive from its members or institutions, or by any other external organization according to the established criteria;
- Income received by the Network and its Working Groups for the conduct of its activities in the fulfilment of its purposes.