

# UNOCHR CONSULTATIONS ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## STATEMENT BY NORWAY 5. October 2009

The work being done by the UN Secretary General's Special Representative John Ruggie to clarify the private sector's responsibility for human rights is ground breaking. It is the first time a framework is being developed with the broad support and cooperation of the authorities, civil society and the private sector that holds non-state entities responsible for human rights violations.

The Special representative's work has formed the backdrop for the Norwegian Government's decision to submit a report to the Norwegian Parliament on corporate social responsibility in both the private and the public sector, the first of it's kind. It is available in English on the Norwegian government web. The purpose of this white paper is to raise awareness about SCR, and to clarify the authorities' expectations of the private sector.

For Norway, it is important that norms are being developed under the auspices of the UN, as this lends legitimacy to the process and shows that the UN can be innovative.

However, this also requires that the UN works as one. Also in the filed of business and human rights Norway would like to call for a greater coherence within the UN system.

One concrete example: Norway would like to see that the various existing treaty bodies in a clearer and more comprehensive manner provide guidance to states on how to maneuver in this difficult terrain. Inspiration could be sought from discussions coming out of referrals to CERD; the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination. However, treaty bodies cannot act on their own. We would like to take this opportunity to encourage civil society, NGOs and affected communities to refer cases to the UN treaty system.

Finally, we would like to congratulate the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative with the results achieved so far. With a renewed mandate and the backing of a unanimous Human Rights Council, we can now move forward towards greater normative clarity in the area of business and human rights. Norway remains a strong supporter of the mandate.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.