

VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES FRAMEWORK FOR ADMISSION OF NEW COMPANIES

Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, Canada, Colombia, and Switzerland, companies in the extractive sector, and non-government organizations, all with an interest in human rights and corporate social responsibility, have engaged in a dialogue on security and human rights. The participants recognize the importance of the promotion and protection of human rights throughout the world and the constructive role business and civil society – including non-governmental organizations, labor/trade unions and local communities – can play in advancing these goals.

1. Admissions Process

- 1.1 Any company in the extractive industry may formally request admission to the Voluntary Principles (hereinafter referred to as “applicant company”).
- 1.2 The request for application is to be made in writing to the Secretariat using the Action Plan Form (Annex 1).
- 1.3 An applicant company will be welcomed to join the VPs if there is consensus among the participants, as represented by the Steering Committee, that the organization meets the entry criteria below. If consensus cannot be reached, then the matter will be resolved through an open vote by at least 75% of the members of each pillar (government, NGO, and company). The approval or rejection of the application is communicated to the Secretariat through the Steering Committee, and the Secretariat will advise the applicant of the decision.
- 1.4 If an application has been rejected, the applicant company has the right to appeal. The application request will be reconsidered and the process will be repeated following subsequent dialogue between the steering committee and the applicant company, taking into consideration arguments brought forward by the applicant company.
- 1.5 Annex 2 illustrates the Admissions Process.

2. Entry Criteria

- 2.1 Applicant companies should submit an Action Plan (Annex 1).
- 2.2 Applicant company agrees to proactively implement and/or assist in the implementation of the VPs and to fulfill the roles and responsibilities described in the participation criteria.

2.3 Applicant company recognizes a responsibility to maintain the safety and security of their operations within an operating framework that ensures respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and to act in a manner consistent with the laws of the countries within which they are present, to be mindful of the highest applicable international standards, and to promote the observance of applicable international law enforcement principles (e.g. the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials), particularly with regard to the use of force, and as it relates to security and extractives.

3. Participating companies

3.1 Participating Companies are inter alia:

- a) Eligible to participate fully in all aspects of the Voluntary Principles, including governance and other decision-making forums, and
- b) Required to comply with the Participation Criteria.

ANNEX 1: COMPANY ACTION PLAN

General information

1. Name of company
2. Name, department and job title of primary contact person
3. Address of headquarters

Existing Human Rights related implementation

Please provide examples of how your company / organization already implements, or supports implementation of the Voluntary Principles.

4. Describe company policies or codes of conduct that you have in place, or plan to put in place, with regard to security and human rights. If available, provide concrete examples of how your company currently implements security and human rights principles and/or practices in your operations.
5. Provide information on how your company already co-operates with existing Voluntary Principles participants on security and human rights issues. Specify which countries and which companies, governments, or NGOs your company co-operates with.

Action plan for implementation of VPs

6. List the countries in which implementation of the Voluntary Principles is of particular interest or relevance to your company.
7. Explain what type of presence your company has in the countries listed above (e.g. operating company, joint venture, minority investor, etc)
8. Explain how your company would contribute to implementation / support of implementation and advancement of the Voluntary Principles if it became a participant. Please indicate whether your response relates to company, country, and/or global levels, and also include an indicative timeframe.
9. Explain how the Voluntary Principles will enhance or assist the current efforts of your company and/or future plans.
10. Please attach any additional information that might help in the consideration of your request (e.g. relevant extracts from your Annual Reports or CSR reports).

Annex 2: Applicant Process Flowchart

