

RE: Have your say! Help a new UN body ensure respect for human rights by business
Rasim S. Abderrahim

Dear Sir / Madam,

With reference to the subject matter at this [link](#), there are many issues to propose in this regard and to build viable thematic priorities. The most important I find are those related to:

1. Knowledge and Skills
2. Innovation and Creativity
3. Intellectual Property Rights

It is my observation that multinational / transnational businesses (operating in host countries) tend to ignore the rights of their local employees, using non-working hours / free time, to build their own knowledge and skills and to innovate and be creative to build their careers. As soon as an employee is hired, many corporate measures and administrative procedures are created to hinder an employee's right to build his or her knowledge and skills when that employee is on his or her free time. That applies to the right to innovate and create. These are related somehow to intellectual property rights; as soon as an employee is instated his or her future as a human being (and in terms of intellectual capacity) becomes somehow owned by the foreign corporation or business. That is a violation of human rights.

Using non-working hours, a local employee should have universal rights to build his / her knowledge and skills and to create and innovate in order to build his / her future career. There should be definitive guidelines encouraging multinational businesses to respect these basic human rights.

Of course there are other issues that relate to the right to join civil society organizations and business groups in addition to issues related to requiring employees to quit their professional affiliations before joining the workplace. Sometimes these professional affiliations are keys to the sustainability of the professional license or practice. Other issues are related to Internet activities in terms of blogging and relationships using social media.

I run my own private trade and economic development practice and also happen to run my own not-for-profit, Internet-borne knowledge network in the area of sustainability and sustainable development. Many foreign businesses ignore the right of an employee to have his or her right to participate in universal sustainability discussions and social responsibility practice-sharing due to the fact that many of such businesses (in certain parts of Asia and Africa) that enforce such a right-denial are in violation of sustainability practices and principles. That is outrageous.

I am sure you are aware of such issues and will be happy to contribute and support your mission as much as possible.

Best Regards,
Rasim S. Abderrahim
B.Sc. & CAPM in Public Management (UMASS/Boston, 1984)
Founder & Owner
Sustainabilitycorp.net