

**GOVERNMENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC**  
**VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES ON SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**  
**2018 NATIONAL REPORT**

**A. COMMITMENT TO THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES**

The active and constructive international role of the Argentine Republic in the promotion and protection of Human Rights is a solid foundation for the country's participation in the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

We remain firmly committed to the promotion of responsible business conduct with full respect for Human Rights, in accordance with relevant international instruments and initiatives such as the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

We renew our support for this Initiative given that its implementation will contribute to anticipating and mitigating risks associated with the activities involved in extractive industries, in particular those connected with the deployment of public and private security.

Argentina will continue to work with Governments, extractive industries and civil society in order to foster dialogue and cooperation, so as to adequately address matters involving security and Human Rights protection, especially in complex environments, such as the extractive sector.

Moreover, in its current capacity as member of the United Nations Human Rights Council and Vice President of the Group of Latin America and Caribbean, Argentina will continue to promote the highest standards related to business and human rights.

## **B. POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES**

In line with the above notions and the commitments set forth in the National Action Plan, several actions were developed with a focus on various aspects of the implementation of the Voluntary Principles.

Special priority was given to the dissemination and promotion of the Initiative, offering the actors and interested parties information on the mechanism, its content, objectives, and roles.

One noteworthy activity in this context took place on 11 July 2018, when Argentina featured its adherence to the Voluntary Principles Initiative, as part of the event where the National Plan on Business and Human Rights was announced.

The event was inaugurated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship, with participation by the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, the Secretary for Human Rights and Cultural Pluralism, and the United Nations Resident Coordinator. It was attended by more than one hundred representatives of companies, chambers of commerce and industry, civil society organizations and federal government officials. The event was focused on the topic of Business and Human Rights, with a segment on Argentina's adherence to the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, and its content and scope.

Similarly, for the purpose of strengthening dissemination and promotion of the Voluntary Principles, specific communications were addressed to companies and chambers of the sector offering extensive information, as well as the availability of relevant governmental agencies to provide support to the companies in the extractive sector in order to promote respect for human rights in the course of their activities.

On the other hand, in December 2018, the Technical Focal Points in Mining and Hydrocarbons met with the Chamber of Mining Entrepreneurs (CAEM) to

disseminate and provide information on various aspects of Argentina's participation in the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

Finally, it should be noted that a *side event* has been organized in the context of the “*ArMinera*” Fair, which will be held on 7-9 May 2019, to introduce and promote the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

### **C. IMPLEMENTATION AT A NATIONAL LEVEL**

A number of activities were carried out regarding the consolidation and strengthening of the working group in charge of implementing the Voluntary Principles.

This inter-institutional coordination set up in the context of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship -Directorate for Human Rights and Gender Issues- is comprised of:

- Technical Focal Points in the field of mining and hydrocarbons—a task allocated, respectively, to the Secretariat for Mining Policy, National Directorate for Mining Production, and to the Ministry of Economy, National Directorate for Exploration and Production.
- The Secretariat for Human Rights and Cultural Pluralism
- The Ministry of Security: Directorate of Institutional Violence and Secretariat for Civil Protection
- The Secretariat of State for Labour and Employment

The open dynamic in this inter-institutional environment enables its members to address a variety of matters of shared interest, and to work towards more effective implementation of the Voluntary Principles. Recently, it was agreed to include a gender-based approach, with the involvement of relevant agencies.

On the other hand, useful instruments and relevant experiences were identified as a guiding framework that can facilitate and contribute to a more effective implementation of the Voluntary Principles.

To this end, synergies of the Voluntary Principles are promoted in the context of the following regulations and procedures that the Argentine Government is already implementing:

- 2017 - 2020 National Human Rights Action Plan: the Human Rights and Business chapter includes programmatic actions based on international standards to which Argentina adheres, as is the case of the Voluntary Principles.

- National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights: Mining and hydrocarbons are among the productive sectors to be initially addressed in the Plan; in that context, Argentina's commitments as a member of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights Initiative will be included.

- National System for Comprehensive Risk Management and Civil Protection (SINAGIR): this mechanism provides a highly useful tool for implementation of the Voluntary Principles. The purpose of the system is to integrate the actions and operation of the Federal Government, Provincial Governments, the City of Buenos Aires, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations, in order to strengthen and enhance actions aimed at reducing risks, handling crises, and addressing remediation.

- Human Rights training for law enforcement officers: Argentina has attained high standards in various aspects concerning Human Rights protection. An important factor in this regard is Human Rights Education for federal and provincial law enforcement officers, who are offered permanent training.

- Initiative of the Ministry of Labour and the Argentine Standardization Institute (IRAM) to develop an Occupational Quality Management framework as

a voluntary standard to provide guidance to companies in the field of quality management within each organization and through their value chain. Although this initiative does not specifically refer to the Voluntary Principles, it would apply to all types of organization, whether large, medium or small, regardless of the place where they operate.

- Promotion of synergies with international standards on business and human rights: special importance is given to those already being implemented in Argentina, in particular: the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, better known as the "Escazú Agreement", adopted in Costa Rica on 4 March 2018.

#### **D. LESSONS AND ISSUES**

The Federal Government is developing an Action Plan on Business and Human Rights which will establish the key joint lines of action offered to the private sector in order to coordinate actions for the promotion of Human Rights in the corporate environment, in line with the commitment to encourage and foster best practices in the sector, following national standards in this field and United Nations regulations on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The purpose of this Action Plan is to provide an institutional framework for these issues, to identify best practices, to develop capacity building activities, and to analyze possibilities of access to effective remedies and recourse for those whose human rights are affected by corporate actions.

In this context, an important role is given to implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, taking into account that the mining and hydrocarbons sectors are featured as priority productive areas in the Action Plan.