

UPDATE REPORT TO THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES INITIATIVE

JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2019

Introduction

The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR) and the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI) remain important mechanisms for International Alert (hereinafter Alert) in advancing its work on business for peace and promotion of Conflict Sensitive Business Practice (CSBP). This report provides an update of the work that Alert did in promoting VPSHR in 2019. Pursuant to the VPI Reporting Guidelines, this report builds on the full report on VPSHR for 2018 submitted to the VPI Secretariat by Alert. As required by these guidelines, the section below highlights material changes since submission of the 2018 report.

A. Commitment to the Voluntary Principles

	Reporting Guidelines	Update
1.	Describe how you have engaged in the Voluntary Principles Initiative over the past year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Joined the Steering Committee for another two-year term. -Engaged in various online Steering Committee, NGO Pillar and Impact Assessment Working Group meetings, as well as participated in Steering Group retreats and actively inputted to discussions and processes. -organised and hosted the Day 0 NGO Pillar events in March 2019 in relation to the Annual Plenary meeting. -Participated in the in-country VPI steering group in Myanmar.
2.	Describe efforts to increase transparency, both internally and externally, regarding your efforts to implement or support implementation of the Voluntary Principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reported our work with the VPI and our achievements in promotion of VPs in 2019 in Alert's internal reports. -Ongoing sharing of views and approaches within the VPI discussions, etc, including strategy development, Impact Assessment working group, in country working groups funding etc.
3.	Describe any efforts to engage in dialogue with other participants of the Voluntary Principles Initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provided written input and held a call with the secretariat to discuss a proposal to Global Affairs Canada on Gender and the VPs.

B. Procedures

	Reporting Guidelines	Update
4.	Provide a summary of the findings of the verification process as outlined in the NGO Pillar Verification Framework.	N/A

C. Promotion of the Voluntary Principles

	Reporting Guidelines	Update
5.	Describe your efforts to raise awareness of and promote understanding of the Voluntary Principles with both internal and external stakeholders.	-Accompanied some companies in the implementation of VPs through provision of technical advice and review of policies. -Held workshops and training sessions on security and human rights, risk and impact assessments and conflict for companies to create and enhance awareness on VPs and equip some company staff, outsourced private security and public security; and conducted training of trainers to equip participants (from company, private and public security) with skills to effectively train on VPs. The objective of the training of trainers sessions was to extend reach of VPs training and to ensure sustainability and integration hereof with the companies.
6.	Describe efforts to engage and facilitate participation of non-member CSOs, affected communities, and other relevant stakeholders in the Annual Plenary Meeting or workshops.	-Extended invitation to Day 0 event to a number of civil society allies and connections.
7.	Describe your efforts to promote the adoption of the Voluntary Principles into relevant government or corporate policies, as well as international standards and/or guidelines.	-Trained management at headquarters of select transnational companies and provided technical advice on integration of VPs at policy and operational levels.

D. Country Implementation

	Reporting Guidelines	Update
8.	Describe efforts to strengthen the rule of law in the countries where you work.	N/A
9.	Describe efforts to conduct and monitor risk assessments for potential human rights violations in the areas where you work.	-Developed context-specific human rights risks scenarios jointly with a company in its operating area and corresponding prevention and mitigation measures and supported capacity building to monitor implementation through our engagement with the company.
10.	Describe your efforts to strengthen policies, procedures and guidelines related to the implementation of the Voluntary Principles.	-Based on VPSHR compliance assessment of a company in Colombia, we shared findings and recommendations on how to further improve compliance, as well as shared key findings with community stakeholders.
11.	Describe your efforts to engage with or support engagement with the public security	-Offered training to private and public security personnel in South Africa, Albania,

	sectors and/or private security sectors in the countries where you work.	Greece and Italy. This included, but was not limited to, introductory training on VPs, refresher training of VPs and training of trainers on VPs, security and human rights, human rights, conflict, impact assessments, social unrest. - Participated in a joint VPSHR Myanmar In-Country Steering Group Visit to the capital to meet members of the National Security Oversight Committee and introduce the VPI and discuss how it relates to private security companies and public security providers, in light of an upcoming draft law of the private security providers.
12.	Describe efforts to hold Voluntary Principles participants accountable for upholding their roles and responsibilities as members of the Voluntary Principles Initiative.	

E. Lessons and Issues

	Reporting Guidelines	Update
13.	Lessons or issues from this reporting year, as well as plans or opportunities to advance the Voluntary Principles for the organization	-Alert intends to scale its work on training, providing technical advice and influencing the implementation of VPs through engaging with companies as well as financial institutions. -Alert's will continue supporting the work of the VPI through fully engaging in the initiatives of the VPI and playing an active role as a member of the Steering Committee and NGO Pillar. -Plans are underway to expand our work on VPs programmatically through supporting Alert country teams to integrate VPs within their programming and implement this stream of work.