



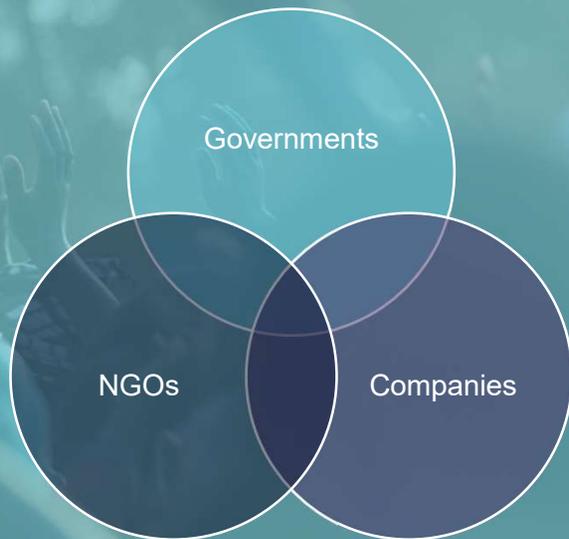
# The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

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**VOLUNTARY**  
**PRINCIPLES**  
ON SECURITY + HUMAN RIGHTS

# Introduction



A set of principles which provide guidance to companies on how to manage their security operations in a manner that reduces the risk of human rights abuses.

Practical guidelines to help extractive, harvesting, natural resources, and energy companies manage risks effectively at the international, national, and project level.

A multi-stakeholder initiative established in 2000.

Platform for mutual learning, problem solving and building best practices on security and human rights challenges.

# Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI): Forum for Multistakeholder Engagement

- The VPI is a membership-based initiative comprised of companies, governments and civil society
- A key element of the VPI is multi-stakeholder engagement, peer learning and sharing of best practices, especially regarding complex environments
- VPI supports in-country implementation groups which meet regularly to discuss security and human rights issues and work toward improving trust and mutually agreeable solutions
- Effective engagement at a community, local and international level with NGOs, human rights organizations, other stakeholders greatly enriches risk assessments, conflict analysis, deepens trust and improves problem-solving

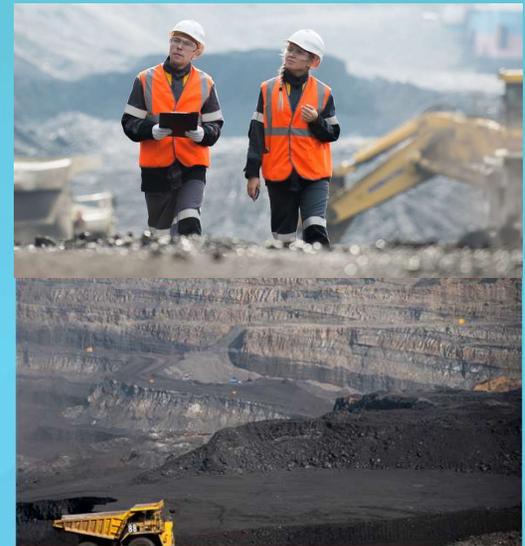
# Why were the Voluntary Principles created?

- In the 1990s there were reports of human rights abuses allegedly committed by security providers contracted by large western oil companies.
- UK and US Governments came together with NGOs and extractives companies and governments to help address these problems.
- Guidance was introduced in 2000 to help companies ensure their security operates in a manner that respects human rights.
- The VPSHR has been implemented widely in public and private sectors.



# Why Implement the Voluntary Principles?

- The VPs can help governments and companies operationalize their duty to protect, respect and fulfill international human rights obligations as outlined in the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- Improves a company's human rights performance; improves relationships with communities contributing to greater stability of operating environments.
- Implementation can potentially reduce exposure to litigation, enhancing the company's reputation, making it an employer of choice and promoting company culture and values.



# Alignment with International Human Rights Standards

- The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights were adopted unanimously by the Human Rights Council in 2010.
- The VPs assist States with their State Duty to Protect Human Rights through direct implementation in public security and working with companies in their jurisdiction.
- The UNGPs call for companies to conduct risk assessments, respect internationally recognized rights, meaning to not infringe upon them, and address adverse impacts with which they are involved.



# Integration with other Codes and Standards

International Finance  
Corporation (IFC)  
*Performance Standard 4*

Consistent with: International  
Code of Conduct Association  
– ICoCA's *Code of Conduct*

OECD *Due Diligence Guidance for  
Responsible Supply Chains of  
Minerals from Conflict-Affected and  
High Risk Areas*

International Council of  
Mining and Metals' *Mining  
Principles*

World Gold Council's *Conflict  
Free Gold Standard*

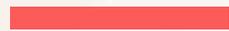
Intergovernmental Forum on  
Mining, Minerals, Metals and  
Sustainable Development's  
*Mining Policy Framework*

## The VPSHR: Three components

Risk  
Assessment

Interactions  
Between  
Companies and  
Public Security

Interactions  
Between  
Companies and  
Private Security



# Risk Assessment

# Risk Assessment

## Risks to Companies and Human Rights Risks

- Prior to starting business activities, companies should assess not just security risks but also risks of human rights abuses to local rights-holders.
- Different risks will be present in the exploration phase, construction stage and the operational stage.
- Examples of risks to local populations: human rights risks related to interactions with security providers; environmental damage; conflict between workers and community members; gender-based violence; increased traffic accidents; strain on natural resources.
- Examples of risks to companies: violence against company personnel; theft, property damage; legal challenges from concerned groups.



# Risk Mitigation

It is essential to mitigate the risks identified in the risk assessment to the extent possible. Some examples:

Strong human rights policies and procedures including rules of engagement.

Developing HR screenings and trainings for security forces

Engaging with public and private security and surrounding communities

Developing systems for reporting and investigations allegations of HR abuses



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# Interactions with Public Security

# Interactions with Public Security

- Companies are often required by law or expected to employ public security for security requirements.
- Risks arise without command-and-control over security that would allow for effective implementation of policies and procedures that improve human rights outcomes.
- Best practices include:
  - ✓ Regular consultations on security impacts
  - ✓ Communication of HR policies and entering into MOUs on HR standards, use of model clauses
  - ✓ Promotion of acceptable and proportional use of force
  - ✓ Effective response to HR abuses



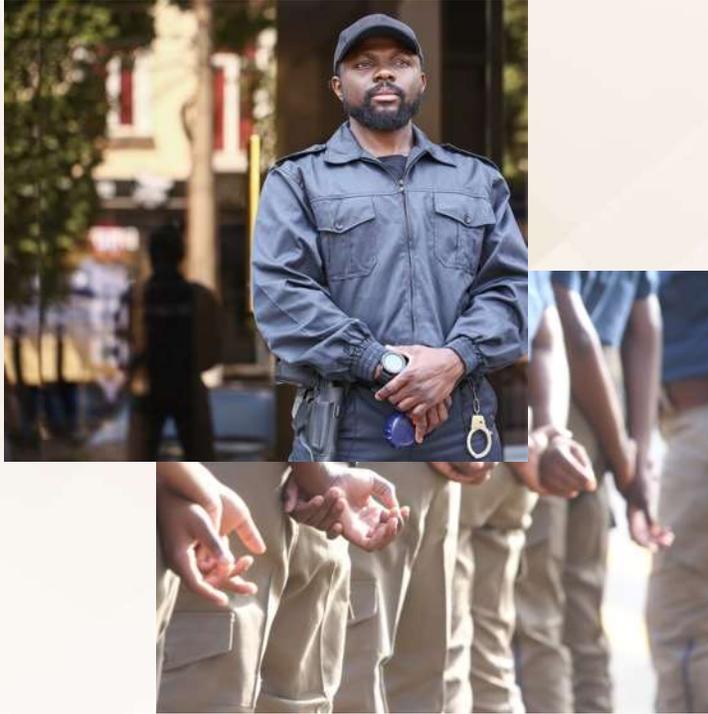
# Managing Public Security Providers

## Contract Clauses

- The VPI has adopted model clauses for use in security agreements between host government security forces and companies.
- The model clauses reflect different elements of the Voluntary Principles and encourage stronger human rights performance.

## Training

- Stakeholders should assess the knowledge and aptitude of public security forces and encourage host governments to respond to gaps.
- VPSHR training course publicly available on website (Implementation webpage) in English and Spanish



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# Interactions with Private Security

# Interactions with Private Security

- Sometimes companies employ security contractors
- Easier to mitigate risks: companies include performance conditions within contracts, place contractors under control of employees such as a security manager.
- Private security company standards and best practices are now well established and widely implemented (e.g. ICoCA standard and accreditation system).
- Private security contractors should follow the same HR policies, procedures, rules and training regimes as company in-house security employees.
- Companies should seek to employ private security providers from the local population as a best practice.



# Managing Security Providers

## Selection/Vetting

- Companies should establish procedures to help ensure that individuals allegedly implicated in human rights abuses do not provide security services for companies.
- Vetting of public security forces can pose unique challenges. As an alternative, companies can look to history of abuses in the area and engage in additional monitoring if misconduct is reported.
- Home-state governments can play a role in supporting the strengthening of host state institutions alongside civil society and multilateral institutions.

# Responding to Human Rights Incidents

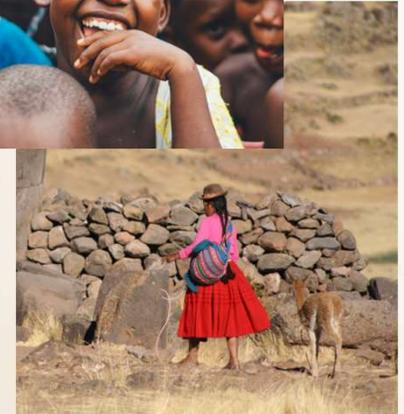
- All VPI stakeholders can play a role in ensuring that human rights incidents receive an appropriate and timely response.
- Under the Principles, companies should record and report to appropriate authorities credible allegations of human rights abuses involving private or public security forces in their areas of operation.
- Companies should require that the concerned individual(s) is/are withdrawn from the site until an official investigation is concluded.
- UNGPs require that effective judicial and non-judicial remedies be available to rights-holders. Members can conduct or encourage investigations as appropriate, and monitor their status, pressing for proper resolution.

# Responding to Changes in the Operating Environment

- Companies should regularly update risk and conflict analysis including when major political, social or economic events occur or alongside any major business decision related to an ongoing project.
- Engagement with communities should be ongoing; good relations act as an early warning system. Communities should be informed of any upcoming changes and have access to channels for dialogue.
- Governments, companies and NGOs should exchange intel and perspectives on events or trends that could affect the security of the operating environment.
- By regularly reviewing and verifying VPs-related policies and practices, VPI members can ensure their approach remains current in changing contexts.

# Attention to Vulnerable Groups

- Companies should consider the needs of vulnerable groups such as human rights defenders; Indigenous peoples; and women and children in risk assessments and mitigation.
- Companies should engage a range of stakeholders and expertise to ensure different perspectives are included within risk assessments, policies and procedures.
- New tools to support VPI members in integrating vulnerable group and gender-based analysis into their policies and procedures will be available in future.



# Working with other Stakeholders on Implementation

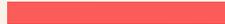
## Community Engagement

- Meaningful consultation with communities sets the stage for the likelihood of human rights-maximizing opportunities throughout the project life-cycle.
- Companies should treat security activities and community engagement activities as interrelated processes.
- Companies should recognize when local community support for activities or a “social license to operate” is missing and be aware of the associated security and human rights risks stemming from local grievances.
- NGOs have knowledge of local community dynamics and broader conflict dynamics. Companies can work with NGOs to help establish positive relations with communities.

# Working with other Stakeholders on Implementation

## Working with Host Governments

- Members should identify VP champions within Host Governments and establish strategic relationships with specific individuals and organizations to assist with VP implementation.
- Members should raise the VPs with Host Governments during or immediately following investment decisions and contract negotiations.
- Communication with Host Governments on the VPs should be consistent and regular.
- Governments and companies can examine possibilities of incorporating the VPs into investment treaties and agreements.



# 2019-2022 Strategy

# VPI priorities: 2019-2022 Strategy

2019-2022 Strategy available on website. Some areas of focus:

- Advancing implementation through support to in-country multi-stakeholder groups: supporting working groups in Ghana, Nigeria, Myanmar; project in Peru.
- Provide guidance and assistance on complex implementation issues
  - Guidance on gender and vulnerable groups
  - Understanding conflict drivers, due diligence in conflict-affected areas
  - Guidance on Protecting Human Rights Defenders.
- Strengthening accountability and governance within the Initiative
- Strategic collaboration with other initiatives: UNWG, ICoCA, DCAF, OECD

# Thank you

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