International Network for Corporate Social Responsibility

3rd International Conference on Business and Human Rights in Africa

Theme: Exploring the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development in Africa

Date: 20th – 21st November 2017

Venue: NICON LUXURY Hotels, Tafawa Balewa Way, Garki, Abuja, Nigeria

Concept Note

Recent trade and economic developments around the world, including deregulation, privatization, and trade liberalization— all components of transnational globalization—have led to the emergence of powerful non-state actors that sometimes have greater resources than sovereign states. In 1979, Archic Carrol acknowledged the multidimensional nature of Corporate Social Responsibility when he stated that the social responsibility of business "encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations at any given point in time". Though there are decades of studies regarding CSR's intersection with law and society, the quest for best practices and appropriate methodology remains an on-going challenge. African countries in particular are struggling to locate the right balance between the different approaches to CSR regulation which also is a major task for State and non-State actors.

Given CSR's obvious relationship to law, business, ethics and sustainable development, there is need to explore enforceable options rather than promoting its soft law, voluntary core. While the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights ("Ruggie Principles") reinstated the State's duty to protect human rights, its recognition of the responsibility of corporate actors to respect the rights of their stakeholders is also an important accomplishment. How to practicalize these norms in the face of new global challenges such as economic inequalities and environmental concerns is therefore a major social objective.

The Third African International Conference on Business and Human Rights will aim to critically assess the existing CSR regulatory and self-regulatory attempts in different African countries across various industry sectors. It will focus on the lessons learned and the risks and opportunities of different corporate and other regulatory mechanisms. Presentations will also dwell on the implications of these mechanisms for international governance and how they can promote the availability of domestic civil remedies. Priority would be accorded presentations that address the relationship between CSR and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard issues of inequality, environmental sustainability and poverty reduction would be of priority.

It will also be a platform to launch the new Business and Human Rights Toolkit aimed at providing a comprehensive online resource centre for both State and non-State actors in the promotion of corporate human rights policies in Africa.

The forum will be a leading platform for business leaders, academics and Government officials to discuss the intrinsic link between Effective legislation / public policy and Corporate behaviour; a place to identify solutions that integrate CSR principles into corporate governance and core business, a networking opportunity to build relationships with key partners, a means to gain reputational benefits from being involved. It is also an opportunity to assess the progress made in Africa since the last conference and to look forward to new possibilities for a more sustainable future in the continent.

Again this year, the conference will place strong emphasis on national laws, regulatory powers, company policies and business strategies that are presently available in African countries.

The two-day workshop will recognise innovative approaches being implemented by leading organisations and feature thought leaders; and research on a diverse range of issues facing governments and businesses in Africa. As usual, we will bring together representatives from various parts of the globe to share their experiences, challenges and ideas on the matter.

Conference Themes

The Conference will be organised in four themes, comprising of plenary sessions and panel discussions for each of these critically important issues relating to the intersection between CSR, Law and Ethics. Plenary speakers include some of the leading thinkers in these areas, and the conference will feature numerous papers, and workshop presentations. We are inviting abstracts for paper presentations and workshops addressing but not limited to the following broad conference themes:

SN	Broad theme	Sub-themes
Plenary	Inauguration of the Business and Human Rights Online Toolkit	Presentations by the President, Coordinator and other relevant persons Inauguration
1	The Challenging Legal Framework of CSR – National and International Law	State Actors – this sub theme will cover a wide range of issues relating to Global governance, legislation and CSR / Sustainability - active CSR legislations and regulations; ■ industrial regulations and policies; ■ robust social provisions delivered and sustained through publicly regulated and locally appropriate legal systems and ■ Corruption and its impact on CSR ■ CSR and Sustainable development goals ■ Functions of the National Human Rights Commissions in line with the Paris Declaration – development of national action plans on business and human rights ■ Challenges of formulating Effective National

		CSR Legislations, etc.
2.	CSR Social Impact and Assessment	State and Non State Actors – Responsibility to Respect ■ Social Impact of business activities on host communities and the wider society ■ Creating shared stakeholder value - Consumer rights, compliance with labour / employment laws, environmental laws, etc ■ Human Rights in the value chain ■ Corporate Philanthropy and the evolution of CSR ■ CSR / Sustainability global best practices ■ Corruption and its social impact on the citizenry, etc.
3	Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change	State and Non State Actors - Impact of business on the environment ■ Environmental human rights issues ■ Environmental sustainability and climate change ■ Environmental and climate change governance ■ Environmental sustainability factors associated with next-generation biofuels; ■ Extractive industries, occupational health and safety, etc. ■ Deforestation and associated corrupt practices ■ Environmental management system (EMS) .etc..
4.	CSR and the Economy	State and Non State Actors - Economic Impact and Welfare ■ CSR and responsible investments – financial institutions, ■ CSR and foreign direct investments, etc. ■ Effective CSR as a viable option for sustainable economy ■ Regulatory framework and its effects on the economy including tax systems. ■ CSR and Return on assets ■ CSR, business risks and SME sustainability ■ CSR and sustainable national development, ■ CSR and alternative national income, etc.

Conference Sponsorship / Partnership

We offer platforms for Panel Sponsorships, Exhibitions and Partnerships

Submit a Conference Abstract

Abstracts for the conference should be emailed to admin@incsr.org and should be no more than 300 words. The deadline for submission is **31st July 2017**. Authors of accepted abstracts will be notified by **14th August, 2017**. Authors of accepted abstracts must also submit the full conference paper and a Power point presentation of no more than 12 slides by **30th October 2017**. Please note that late paper submissions will not be considered.

Important dates

Event	Date
Abstract submission opens	12th June 2017
Abstract submission deadline	31st July 2017
Acceptance Notification	14th August 2017
Full paper submission deadline	30th October 2017

For further enquiries, abstract submissions and sponsorship, please contact: The Local Organising Team at admin@incsr.org, incsr@gmail.com, admin@debernardsltd.com. Tel: +234 (0) 81 086 10473, 81 718 61482; Web: www.incsr.org

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