CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND BUSINESS PRINCIPLES IN BELGIUM

Summary report:
Children’s Rights and Business Principles Forum

Egmont Palace
3 December 2012, Brussels

www.childrenandbusiness.be
BACKGROUND

Developed by UNICEF, the UN Global Compact and Save the Children – the Children’s Rights and Business Principles (the Principles) are the first comprehensive set of principles to guide companies on the full range of actions they can take in the workplace, marketplace, community and environment to respect and support children’s rights. While the business and human rights agenda has evolved significantly in recent years, a child rights perspective has not yet been explicitly addressed.

The Principles are built on existing standards, initiatives and best practices related to business and children, and seek to fill gaps to present a coherent vision for business to maximize the positive impacts and minimize negative impacts on children. In doing so, the Principles help to elaborate both expectations of, and opportunities for business, in relation to children; who are often overlooked as stakeholders of business.

Recognizing the important contribution that business can make in shaping these Principles and ensuring their relevance to business operations, the partners launched an extensive multi-stakeholder consultation process involving business, civil society, governments and children across sectors and geographies. Representatives of more than 600 business, civil society, government and academic entities participated in face-to-face consultations in 11 countries, as well as through online consultations. The process included consultations with more than 2,000 children in nine different countries. An online feedback channel was also launched by the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre.

THE CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND BUSINESS PRINCIPLES FORUM IN BELGIUM

The Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, under the leadership of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs, Mr. Didier Reynders, and the Global Compact Network Belgium hosted the first Belgian Children’s Rights and Business Principles Forum on 3 December 2012 at the Egmont Palace in Brussels. The presence and top leadership support of HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium has truly positioned Belgium worldwide as a champion in promoting the Children’s Rights and Business Principles.

This Forum was established thanks to the excellent support of the Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, the King Baudouin Foundation, the close cooperation with UNICEF Belgium, Children’s rights commissioner office, Save the Children, the Council of Europe, the European commission, the Antwerp Management School, and the private sector.

The Forum is a result of the commitment to His Secretary General Ban Ki Moon of two Belgian participants of the Global Compact Network Belgium at the LEAD meeting at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Telenet and Rosy Blue, to promote children’s rights and business principles in Belgium and abroad. They reached out to UNICEF Belgium and the Belgian/European public-private sector to start an engagement process by establishing a multi-stakeholder working group that would prepare the Forum. A website for the forum has been created www.childrenandbusiness.be and this site will be maintained after the event to update the stakeholders.

The following partners joined hands: BVBA 32, Solvay, Studio 100, SNCB, GlaxoSmithKline Vaccines, Ernst & Young, Antwerp World Diamond Centre, Ikea, Ferrero, Rosy Blue and Telenet. Important to mention is the excellent support given by UNICEF, United Nations Global Compact Office New York, Save the Children Sweden, Council of Europe and the European Commission.

The event was attended by more than 200 invitees from business, the public sector and civil society. Materials relating to the Forum, the press release and the special message for the Belgian Forum by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon can be found at www.childrenandbusiness.be.

This report summarizes the key themes and discussions from the Forum. Following the opening and introductions, the event was structured in two parts. The morning session, moderated by Iris Van der Veken, Chair Global Compact Network Belgium (Manager Corporate Affairs global Rosy Blue), captured the introduction to the Children’s Rights and Business Principles and showed the critical views from civil society, the Council of Europe and top business leaders. A clear overview was given on the state of the world, facts and figures on Children’s Rights worldwide and in Belgium.

The afternoon session, moderated by Stefan Maes, Communications Director VBO, focused on guidance on how to implement the Children’s Rights and Business Principles. A panel discussion took place with a concrete call for action in Belgium from a child’s perspective. The media was present until the first coffee break. The final session of the day offered a recap of the discussions.
OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS

Iris Van der Veken, Chair Global Compact Network Belgium, opened the event. She began by noting the important leadership role HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and European Affairs Didier Reynders and his team has taken in the preparations of the Forum.

She emphasized that the Forum has two major objectives:
- To create awareness on the important role business already plays and to offer a welcome new perspective that can help CEO’s, managers and workers to greater levels of implementation of the principles.
- To create valuable partnerships and other forms of collective action in advancing Children’s Rights in Belgium and abroad.

She explained to the audience that the principles are aligned with and complement the United Nations Global Compact Principle 1, the framework of the revised definition of the European commission, the revised OECD guidelines, The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the ISO 26000 guidelines.

She strongly believes these Children’s Rights and Business Principles create a framework and give rise to opportunities for companies in Belgium and other stakeholders to engage and work to respect and support children’s rights on a local level or in their global supply chain. Van der Veken reconfirmed that this event is a first step in a long term planning of a series of concrete actions and events to promote and implement the principles in the Belgian sustainability landscape and beyond.
ADDRESS BY HRH PRINCESS MATHILDE OF BELGIUM

HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium was very happy to see the public and private sectors join hands with representatives of child rights organisations in a shared commitment to work together to make the rights of the child a reality.

HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium noted that this Forum is an important benchmark for the promotion and respect of the rights of the child by the business community in Belgium. HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium sees an important role for both big companies, and small and medium enterprises. For many years now, Belgium has played a pioneering role in the field of human rights worldwide.

As a mother, and as the honorary chair of UNICEF Belgium, she feels strongly about the importance of children in our societies. HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium is also convinced that the private sector in general, and the corporate sector in particular, can play a crucial role in promoting respect for the rights of every child in its daily life.

HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium indicated that the Children’s Rights and Business Principles offer a concrete platform for business leaders to analyze their impact on children, to examine their respect for children’s fundamental rights, and to adapt their business processes where necessary. In doing this, businesses can give real content to their ambitions and strategies in terms of corporate social responsibility.

HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium emphasized that the business community has enormous potential to affect children’s lives - both positively and negatively. It can make an important contribution towards the realization of the rights of the child, not only through its own practices and policies, but also by setting a good example. And it can use its influence to promote good practices and change negative attitudes, policies and institutions.

HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium also stated that there is a moral imperative for business to contribute actively to promote the right of every child to good health, education, protection and participation in society. But the Principles also make sound business sense. They contribute to building healthy societies, where everyone can develop his or her full potential. In so doing they also create a favorable environment for entrepreneurs. Moreover, a good corporate reputation is attractive to consumers, investors, employees, suppliers and other business partners. In other words, such social investment will contribute to the redistribution of wealth and in the longer term, it will have a structural impact on the region.
KEYNOTE BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS DIDIER REYNDERS

Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and European Affairs, expressed his delight to welcome all participants in the Egmont Palace for the important Forum dedicated to Children’s rights, and more specifically to how Business can contribute to their promotion and protection.

The Minister stated that human rights are at the center of Belgian Foreign Policy and campaigning for children’s rights is a priority within this priority. Since the Minister took office, he has run awareness raising events on various human rights. He sees his responsibilities as Foreign Minister and as Minister of Foreign Trade as complementary and even mutually reinforcing. The promotion and protection of human rights and of the rule of law are also key for the business climate. And economic progress is also contributing to the enhancement of human rights.

The past twenty years, he has seen a tectonic change in the way the industry at large commits to promoting essential rights, understanding that Corporate Social Responsibility, transparency, accountability and the promotion of high standards are not merely burdens imposed on business, or a killer of shareholder value, but the keys to sustainable and lasting productivity and return on capital.

He is convinced cooperation between business, non-profit and government has to become the virtuous triangle of international growth and development. In this regard, he believes in the importance of the Department’s involvement as focal point for the Global Compact Network Belgium.

The Minister believes that a State, even as a group of states if you consider the EU as a whole, needs to convince its citizens to be part or even to be an actor of the process when it tries to achieve a goal. This is also true for the Business community.

Corporate sustainability is a relatively new concept but it has been gaining importance fast as a way for companies to control their impact on the environment. In June 2011, the United Nations Human Rights Council endorsed the Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights, on the Implementation of the UN ‘Protect, Respect, Remedy’ Framework. The Framework is organized around the foundational principles of the state duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties, including business: the corporate responsibility to respect human rights; and the need for more effective access to remedies. The Guiding Principles provide a global standard for preventing and addressing the risk of adverse impacts on human rights linked to business activity.

The Minister noted that the Guiding Principles are an important and useful tool at the disposal of companies. But that this tool was not sufficient in itself to efficiently guarantee children's rights. Important stakeholders, like UNICEF, Global Compact and Save the Children, therefore decided to develop and launch the “Children's rights and Business Principles”, designed to serve as the first comprehensive instrument dedicated to guiding companies in their action to respect and support the rights of children.
He emphasized that these Principles go beyond traditional philanthropy, but provide guidance on how a company can respect and support children’s rights and thus help build a sustainable future for the company and society. The Minister stated: “I am thus particularly happy that this conference can count on the participation of a lot of Belgian and international business representatives who are already convinced of the necessity to implement these principles in their various companies and who want to exchange their best practices.”

The Minister recognized that it can be challenging for a company to ensure that its supply chain is totally free of any risk. When a product is made in a remote country through various suppliers, contractors and subcontractors, it is not always an easy task to detect the problems. He pointed out that there is also a responsibility of local governments to control how local companies act as far as children’s rights are concerned. Companies should not automatically and systematically be blamed for any problem that would arise in their supply chain. But he is convinced that the more attentive these companies will be to the issue, the better children’s rights will be protected.

The Minister urged all major stakeholders, private and public to implement the same criteria in order to avoid a distorted global playing field. Responsibilities are shared among governments and companies. He called upon everyone to work together for a better world for children, one in which they should stop being the usual victims when it comes to human rights violations.
INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPLES

Elisabeth Dahlin, Secretary General, Save the Children Sweden, described the extensive consultation process which was launched to develop the Principles. Representatives of more than 600 business, civil society, government and academic entities participated in face-to-face consultations in 11 countries, as well as through online consultations. The process included consultations with more than 2,000 children in nine different countries. During this networking consultation process, the Principles were extended from 7 to 10 Principles. Welcoming the launch in Belgium, she is confident that the national launches worldwide will put the Children’s Rights and Business Principles to the next level.

Dahlin emphasized that the Principles are about integrating children’s rights in businesses’ core operations and within their spheres of influence. “Corporations can together with other actors make changes in their spheres of influence, as well as influencing governments, and make an enormous difference in the lives of children.”

Dahlin also believes that progress and implementation of the Principles should be measured and reporting is key to really make that change happen.

Bo Viktor Nylund, Senior Advisor Corporate Social Responsibility, UNICEF, was delighted to be at the launch within the European hub and center of policymaking, Brussels. He stressed the importance of these meetings and discussions, because the Principles, whilst comprehensive and practical, still need to look more in depth into how companies can take these onboard. He emphasized that the Principles are built on the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, including the due diligence framework.

Some companies have already incorporated the Principles into their policy, and commitment of intent to take them onboard. These companies are not just looking at risks, but also what opportunities exist. There is no one size fits all, nor are all the Principles equally relevant to all companies, but the Principles help companies make children’s rights an entry point for respecting and supporting human rights.

Nylund indicated that the Children’s Rights and Business Principles are an ongoing process and stated that the next phase in this journey will be to develop implementation tools and sector specific guidance to take this to the next level.

Ursula Wynhoven, General Counsel, United Nations Global Compact Office, thanked the different players for this event before delivering a special message from the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to the Forum:

“Businesses have a major impact on the lives of children, and children are a central part of the communities where businesses operate – as family members of employees, as consumers, as citizens who for better or worse must live with the results of business activities, and as future businesspeople themselves.

Leading businesses increasingly recognize their responsibility to respect the rights of the youngest members of our society. But when it comes to children, we all need to do more to ensure their full protection.
That is why I am so pleased to support the Children’s Rights and Business Principles, which were developed by UNICEF, the UN Global Compact, and Save the Children, and provide the first comprehensive framework for companies to consider their impact on the rights and wellbeing of children.

I thank you for bringing momentum to the cause of children’s rights in Belgium.
I especially welcome your initiative to convene this Conference so soon after the launch of the Principles this March in London.

I extend special thanks to the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the King Baudouin Foundation, UNICEF Belgium, and the Global Compact Network Belgium for launching a Forum on Children’s Rights and Business Principles. Your combined efforts show the power of partnerships to drive change.

I call on private sector executives in Belgium and around the world to embrace the Children’s Rights and Business Principles. Let us do our utmost to foster conditions where children live free of fear and exploitation, and where they are free to thrive and grow into leaders of the future.”
KAURI VIEWS ON THE PRINCIPLES

Wouter Vermeulen, Chair of the Board, Kauri, gave a brief introduction on Kauri, a multistakeholder, Belgian initiative. They looked upon the Principles when planning and carrying out their initiative on swapping roles of CEOs to create better understanding of different perspectives. In this regard, the CEO of Plan België switched jobs for a day with the CEO of the Antwerp World Diamond Center where the focus lay on how to leverage expertise on children’s rights in the diamond sector.

Vermeulen emphasized that a core object of Kauri is to advance fair labour practices and work together with several members on responsible marketing. He indicated that although the economic climate is volatile, Belgian companies keep recognizing the sustainability agenda. He strongly believes in the need to balance the importance of both protection and empowerment of children. In this regard, Vermeulen indicated the importance of innovation and inclusion; we should look further than to victimize children.

Kauri has performed a separate session on the Principles with their member NGO’s. The outcome of this consultation process was very positive. Their 170 members declared to commit to the Principles. Furthermore, a follow-up event of the Forum will be organized by Kauri in 2013.

EUROPEAN VISION ON THE PRINCIPLES BY ELDA MORENO, COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Elda Moreno, Head of the Gender Equality and Human Dignity Department, Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe, emphasized that for the Council of Europe, children are not mini-human beings with mini-human rights. The Council of Europe’s vision obviously includes children as rights holders and citizens who should also benefit from the rule of law principle.

She mentioned the Council of Europe programme “Building a Europe for and with children” which was launched in 2006 to link their vision with concrete and effective action. It is clear to her that children’s rights call for a strategic approach.

The Council of Europe has adopted over 200 treaties, many of them concerning children, some devoted specifically to children’s rights related issues. Typically, when they prepare their standards, the negotiation table includes governments and some observers. But as Moreno explains, the private sector has seldom been involved in the negotiations and seldom been referred to in the resulting texts. The corollary is also that the Council of Europe has seldom co-operated with the private sector in the implementation or dissemination of standards, although the situation has evolved according to Ms Moreno as recent Council of Europe conventions contain provisions referring to corporate liability and to the need to involve the private sector in the definition and implementation of prevention and protection measures. Moreno is confident that any action proposed will take as a starting point the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Children’s Rights and Business Principles, and the suggestions made will aim at helping to fill the dissemination and the implementation gaps.
Moreno indicated that the Council of Europe should take the following directions: “First, to make a real communication effort around the Children’s Rights and Business principles, to make sure that they reach at least all medium and large companies. States should support this effort. Secondly, call for volunteers to test the implementation of the principles and take further steps thanks to the lessons learnt.” She believes that UNICEF’s excellent pilot workbook “Children are everyone’s business” and the tools developed by Global Compact provide us with an excellent basis for such an exercise. As a third direction, Moreno believes the Council of Europe should target a number of business areas or children’s rights issues where action seems to be particularly urgent or challenging. To her, the media and internet sectors would come at the top of her list.

As a last remark she urged for the need to discuss how to overcome both the legal obstacles to the prosecution of crimes against children outside a State jurisdiction and the lack of children’s access to remedies.

Moreno believes that there is a huge potential in public-private partnerships for the promotion of children’s rights. But one of the difficulties that the Council of Europe is experiencing in obtaining support from the private sector on children and violence related issues comes from their resistance to be associated with “negative issues or images”. Another is the difficulty to choose amongst the hundreds of projects in need of support. Both can be easily overcome with creativity and good will. The Global Compact provides them with a wonderful platform to achieve this.

She called upon working together in promoting these principles and ideals so that we can achieve real social and economic progress.
CHILDREN’S RIGHTS ARE EVERYONE’S BUSINESS

Amit Bhansali, CEO Rosy Blue NV started his speech with a very personal story on why this topic is very important to him. He gave the example of his father’s exploited and humble beginning as a young child in India that turned out to be a successful and happy life; but indicated that not every exploited child will have the same fate. He asked all participants to agree that children should not be exploited in any circumstances!

Bhansali analyzed figures such as the poverty and development index which measures healthy life, decent standard of living and access to education, and expressed his concerns as every excluded child represents a missed opportunity. He stated that when society fails to protect its children it loses the social, cultural and economic contributions they could have made.

Bhansali emphasized that commitment from the top is the first key to putting the principles in concrete action, but was very clear that social investments and philanthropy are not enough. He believes that a company must think about its impact from a children’s rights perspective and take more actions!

He indicated the importance to assessing your company’s impact on children’s rights and to have a clear picture of the risks involving children’s rights in the countries where you might have operations. Not all principles are applicable and / or relevant to every company. It is important to select the most relevant principles for your business.

Integration of the Principles in the field is the biggest challenge. As an example, Mr. Bhansali illustrated the case of the Rosy Blue factory in Thailand. Thailand faces many child related issues. 8% of the population lives in extreme poverty. Women and girls belonging to ethnic minorities and from poor rural areas are most vulnerable. Approximately 7.7% of Thailand’s children under 15 years are working as immigrants and poor families rely heavily on the income from child labour. Furthermore, Mr. Bhansali indicated that Thailand has not ratified all of the main international labour rights and health and safety standards conventions, thus presenting a higher risk to businesses operating in or sourcing from the country. Poor working conditions are common due to the poor enforcement of existing labour regulations.

To improve and protect the rights of children through their operations, Rosy Blue supports the parent in their role as caregiver, providing decent work with an adequate living wage and good working conditions. To help Rosy Blue in its journey, they opted for the SA8000 management system, which is one of the world’s first auditable social certification standards for decent workplaces, across all industrial sectors.

Before this year’s revision of the legal minimum wage by the Thai government, Rosy Blue already had a salary package in place for years that rewarded its people 40-60% more than the national minimum wage. Bhansali states: “It is good that the government has uplifted the wage structure as we strongly believe that if families have decent income, children have better access to education, wellbeing and development. We try to support our employees in meeting both their work commitments and family responsibilities. Two thirds of the employees in our factory are women who benefit from a number of family-friendly programs such as an on-site nursery health and breastfeeding programs.”
Bhansali believes that a company should also engage beyond the workplace by collaborating and partnering up with local NGO’s and local governmental agencies, on projects that respect the local community and their culture. A next challenge will be reporting as he sees a clear need for a reporting framework on the implementation of Children’s rights to show a company’s progress.

He emphasized that the fact remains that children’s rights continue to be inadequately protected in the world. The Children’s Rights and Business Principles can help companies - big and small, to analyze how they can improve the lives of children while running their operations. And there is still one more dilemma that remains unsolved for him. Bhansali: “On one hand governments have developed regulations in a way they believe what acceptable ethical behavior is all about. So what would your response be to a 13 year old boy who comes to your factory asking for work? He has 3 younger siblings and his mother is a widow. The family has no protection by the government, no social security, no basic living standard. The only option for the mother is her son to work to survive. What would you do?”

And of course Bhansali stated he is against child labour, but strong evolving partnerships are needed that take into consideration the reality out there and we should build bridges through access to education, healthcare etc so children can develop themselves to their full potential. “And what about the role of governments and NGO’s, how can we connect and develop action plans incorporating the development of children into long term partnerships? Are we not forgetting sometimes that respecting children’s rights is a shared responsibility?” These are just a few critical questions and he invited the participants to think about them.

He concluded that the bottom line is that without leadership commitment change will not happen. Bhansali: “If we each go away and tell five people today, the Principles are spreading already.”

He ended with a quote from Mary Robinson, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: “Human rights are inscribed in the hearts of people; they were there long before lawmakers drafted their first proclamation.”
THE STATE OF THE WORLD: FACTS AND FIGURES ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WORLDWIDE AND IN BELGIUM BY YVES WILLEMOT, UNICEF BELGIUM

Yves Willemot, Executive Director, UNICEF Belgium, elaborated on the state of children worldwide and more specifically in Belgium. In 2011, 6.9 million children died before reaching the age of five. Over one third of these under-five mortality deaths are attributable to malnutrition. Willemot acknowledged the high figures but stated that the figures have almost halved since 1990 as a result of well-planned strategies and campaigns. 19,000 children under five are dying every day, where 40% of child mortality could be prevented by promoting exclusive breastfeeding and regular hand washing.

Yves Willemot also indicated that education is a key factor in the development of children. Following James Heckman’s curve, the earlier a child has access to education, the better its development evolves. Nowadays unfortunately, over 61 million children are not enrolled in school although there has been a huge progression access to education in last 20 years. Willemot expressed the urgency to understand the reasons of non-enrolment and to develop adapted schooling programs to reach the unreached. Also the quality of education should be taken into consideration. He also indicated the need to tackle the underlying cause of school exclusion: poverty. In Belgium, we face growing child poverty and social exclusion as 1 in 5 children face poverty. The problem is much more than income related according to Mr. Willemot. All deprivations are interrelated and reinforce each other.

Willemot indicated the big role the corporate sector should play. There is need for an integrated response towards child issues. Companies could encourage child participation. “Investing in children is a moral imperative, a legal obligation, political engagement and yields positive benefits to economies and societies. Investments in children are increasingly seen as one of the best and most valuable long-term investments we can make.”

Willemot concluded by stating we have made huge progress, but that we need to ensure this is secured in the future as impact on children impacts society as a whole. Further we need to reach the unreached children with our child rights programmes.
PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

Anne Chapelle, CEO, BVBA 32, believes the fashion industry can play an important role in integrating children’s rights in their production processes and marketing. In the fashion industry the principles are also very relevant, issues like sweatshops, under-age models, correct marketing, etc. She strongly believes too many businesses want to sell as much as possible driven by a fast return on investment. We should try to turn that mentality around. But Chapelle also sees a big responsibility with the consumer itself who is many times in search of cheaper products. Ultimately a sustainable choice needs to be made between price and responsibility. From the moment she started her company in 1986 she strives to respect human rights in her company and the company’s supply chain.

Hans Bourlon, CEO, Studio 100, indicated that children’s rights are also important for companies in the media sector. Studio 100 has children at work as performers and strictly adhere to regulations and guidelines that respect their rights. Many merchandising products are produced in China but Bourlon takes it as a priority to work with companies who take responsible business practices at heart. These supplier are externally audited on-site to make sure they comply with the Studio 100 Code of Conduct.

Christian Jourquin, Honorary CEO, Solvay, indicated that respecting and integrating children’s rights is about managing two axes: a horizontal one, integration of these practices and principles within your company, and a vertical axe, the code of conduct towards your suppliers. Jourquin also stated that we should not forget there is no one size fits all and that reporting is utterly important.

Marc Descheemaeker, CEO, NMBS/SNCB, talked about the company’s role in the public transport sector to respect and support children’s rights. He sees three important platforms in a child’s development: education, protection and fun. NMBS/SNCB focuses on education by providing schools with access to transportation. With regards to protection, the company collaborates with the European Center for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children, and train their employees on how to identify and help children who have run away from home. To engage in the fun platform, NMBS/SNCB offers special discounts for groups and families in the weekends to encourage more outings and excursions for children. Bourlon also confirmed that all children should have a right to play and really receive the opportunity to play and learn in a well-balanced positive environment.

Pascal Lizin, Director External and Public Affairs, GlaxoSmithKline Vaccines, indicated providing fair salaries and a healthy and safe workplace for people is key for GSK. Lizin also urged to promote long term partnerships with organisations such as UNICEF and GAVI to
make sure vaccines are distributed all over the world and reach children in need. A fair pricing strategy ensures the vaccines are globally accessible. He also made clear that there should be a clear link between the business and academics world to continue to deliver the best science possible.

The panel discussed the outcomes of the financial crisis and how this will affect children’s rights. Hans Bourlon mentioned that the costs gap between Europe and China is diminishing as transport prices and Chinese wages are rising, these changes should be well monitored.

The greatest problem for companies in Europe is the cost for innovation and research and development said Christian Jourquin. Pascal Lizin mentioned the example of the phase 3 to develop a vaccine against malaria which took 25 years, but to distribute this vaccine at low cost in poor countries, we rely on countries and supranational organizations able to contribute to the global resources and cost needed. Due to the financial crisis however, this is not as easy as it was before as everyone is cutting in their health system costs. Amit Bhansali stated that a change in mindset is needed to rethink one’s business model and defining shared value across the supply chain.

The panel agreed that the role of the consumer is also key. Anne Chapelle indicated that middle class is aware of the issues of cheap products but don’t have adequate means to buy more expensive responsible goods even though they want to. But people who have more financial strength don’t change their consumption patterns yet. Transparency and educating the consumer at every level is imperative here.

In general all participants of the panel said communication to all stakeholders in a clear and practical way is important if we want change to happen.

THE CURRENT STATUS OF REPORTING BY THE CORPORATE SECTOR IN BELGIUM ON THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND CHILDRENS RIGHTS

Harry Everaerts, Partner, Standard Assurances Services, Ernst & Young, presented his research on the reporting practices of Belgian companies on human rights and children’s rights. Everaerts based his research on the corporate reports of 38 companies submitted for the “Award for Best Belgian Sustainability Report 2012”. He indicated that more and more businesses are moving towards the business model of shared value, and that new and successful partnerships are increasingly being formed.

Everaerts indicated that reporting has not matured yet in Belgium. Only one third of companies mention children’s rights, 52% mention human rights in their report. There seems to be a lack of sufficient knowledge on the topic and the link between human rights and business is still not clear to many. It might also not be seen as at the core of Belgian organizations’ activities. Everaerts emphasized that reporting on human rights seems to be sector specific and depending on the geographical presence of a company.
Companies who report on human rights refer mostly to the Principles of the United Nations Global Compact when they address the topic of human rights, and clear good practices do exist. Human rights as an issue are mostly mentioned in the compliance and ethics section in general terms, or in the company strategy and code of conduct. Children’s rights are merely covered in philanthropic sections of the reports.

Everaerts indicated that there is a long way to go. In general, human rights and children’s rights are insufficiently reported upon, but the tone has been set for corporations to take an active role to respect and support human rights, and more specifically children’s rights. He concluded by stating that there is a clear need to link and integrate human rights and children’s rights into the core of a business, and that there is a clear necessity to measure and report this in order to measure it.

**PRESENTATION OF WORKBOOK, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING TOOL**

Bo Viktor Nylund, senior advisor corporate social responsibility, UNICEF, presented the tools UNICEF is producing to guide companies in their journey to take children’s rights at heart. He noted that collaboration between the corporate sector and development agencies such as UNICEF were purely philanthropic some 20-30 years ago, and then became more strategic, while these days such partnerships must include questions of sustainability and alignment with core business.

The foundation of the children’s rights and business principles lays in the corporate responsibility to respect children’s rights and the corporate commitment to support children’s rights. UNICEF has developed several CSR tools. For the first step a company should take, policy commitment, UNICEF is developing a tool for policy development and corporate code of conduct that will be released in March 2013. To assess a company’s impact UNICEF has developed a children’s rights checklist where guidance is given on how companies can better understand their impact on children’s rights. Engaging children as stakeholders of your company is another area for a new tool in early 2013. For integration and action of the Principles, the Workbook has already been released, giving companies clear guidance on how to implement these principles into their core activities.

Nylund recognizes the importance and power of the financial sector, where tracking a company’s performance and reporting is key. In this regard UNICEF has developed the Children’s Rights Reporting Guidance as well as an External Assessment Tool. For the fifth step, remediation, the CRC General Comment is being developed and building on this there will be further guidance.

Nylund called upon companies present to engage in the pilot phase UNICEF is setting up.
RESULTS OF THE SURVEY AND IMPLEMENTATION EXERCISE OF THE CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

Prof. Dr. Luc Van Liedekerke, Antwerp Management School, BASF-Deloitte chair on sustainability, presented the results of a survey conducted to identify the interest and knowledge of Children’s Rights and Business Principles in Belgium. Of the 2500 companies contacted, 10% responded.

Prof. Van Liedekerke indicated that for many companies it is not clear how they impact children. Most of the respondents, large companies but also SMEs and one academic institution, realize that business has a role to play in addressing children’s rights and believe children’s rights to be an important consideration for business. However, most respondents only see action by business necessary overseas and within the supply chain. Majority of the respondents have no policy or management systems in place on children’s rights, but they do impose them on their suppliers. There seems to be a perception that children’s rights in Belgium aren’t as important. Although several companies did report some great initiatives, companies are more interested in projects abroad than in local projects.

The survey showed that companies believed Principles 1 and 10, in their general outline, covered all issues. Principles 2 and 3 were most popular, conceived to address the overseas issues of children’s rights best. Respondents found Principles 6, 7 and 8 to be unclear or irrelevant.

The professor stated that the interest in Children's Rights and Business Principles is definitely there, but that knowledge is still limited and perceived as merely a supply chain issue. Efforts should be made to explain the importance of children’s rights to businesses and in particular the relevance of the Principles at local issues, also in Belgium. Sharing best practices and organize yearly follow-up conferences is desirable.

Professor Van Liedekerke emphasized that the quality of our future society is determined by the way we raise our children today. In Belgium, many children are facing poverty and are denied developmental possibilities. The most important cause of poverty in Belgium is unemployment, so the first thing to do is to provide work for parents taking into account a decent work life balance. He also stressed that it important that the Principles’ implementation is part of the core activity of the firm. “Children’s rights are more closely related to your business than you imagine.”

THE PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

Three companies, Ikea, Telenet and Ferrero outlined their strategy, and how the Children’s Rights and Business Principles are incorporated in their policy.

Olivier Baraille, CEO, Ikea Belgium, indicated that for Ikea, children are the most important people. Ikea has a big impact on children as they influence life at home through their consumers.
In this regard, Ikea holds a zero tolerance towards quality, health and safety of its products. Even the presentation of the products in the stores is taken from a child’s perspective; the store needs to be safe. Ikea also communicates to parents, not to the children.

Baraille concluded by stating that the Children’s Rights and Business Principles should be at the core of one’s business plan, implemented throughout the whole value chain.

Marina De Moerlooze, Director, Telenet Foundation, finds it important to follow the business when it comes to implementing the children’s rights and business principles. As an ITC company they use their knowledge and products to make a difference and to promote issues related to children’s rights. The company constantly impacts the lives of children through their products. Digital inclusion and a correct and safe use of the internet are at the core of their efforts towards children.

A second pillar of their strategy is involving their staff members by encouraging them to do volunteering work, bringing them closer to the Telenet Foundation’s supported projects and also heightening morale of the workforce. As a third pillar, Telenet Foundation invests in external projects in cooperation with the King Baudouin Foundation; reaching out to the communities they work in. She sees KPI’s as very important to make progress, to gain value. By measuring KPI’s the Telenet Foundation has reached already 111,641 children and De Moerlooze has the objective to reach no less than 182,216 children in 2015.

Francesca Poggiali, Global CSR, Ferrero, shared the objective of Ferrero, a family based company: to share with their suppliers, trade partners, commercial agents, subcontractors, distributors, vendors and employees, the Ferrero principles and non-negotiable Ferrero standards. At Ferrero, values are clearly embedded in the business model, working with several certification schemes.

Poggiali indicates that the code of conduct was developed after a benchmarking exercise and consultation process. It is based on five principles: excellence of product quality and safety, human rights commitment, environmental protection and sustainability, adequate workplace conditions and business integrity.

As member of the World Cocoa Foundation and International Cocoa Initiative, Ferrero encourages all actions aimed at raising the minimum age to work to 15 years. If child labour is identified in their supply chain, Ferrero reserves the right to terminate the contract with a business partner immediately.
In respect to children’s rights, Poggiali emphasized the importance of the different collaborative initiatives Ferrero is involved in. One of the activities of Action 2010, a new and historical partnership, is the development of a sector wide Child Labour Monitoring System. The International Cocoa Initiative is committed to heighten access to education by the construction or rehabilitation of classrooms, the mobilization, training and facilitation of teachers and monitoring of enrolment and attendance of children. ICI also engages in the provision of basic services as well as give livelihood support, capacity building, advocacy and child labour monitoring. Poggiali indicated the efforts the ICI is making in this regard: setting up community child protection committees, support national surveys and systems, training stakeholders in responsible supply chain management, linking information to prevention and humane remediation and give support to law enforcement in the battle against trafficking. In 2011, 520 classrooms for 25,000 children have been constructed and 245 teachers have been placed. Several wells and health clinics have been set up and community registers have been updated, issuing birth certificates. 284,000 people have been reached in awareness-raising efforts on child labour and hazardous activity frameworks.

A CALL FOR ACTION IN BELGIUM: A CHILD’S PERSPECTIVE

Bruno Vanobbergen, Children’s Commissioner, and Bernard Devos, Délégué Générale aux Droits de l’enfants, are representing the children at this conference. Their overall mission is to enforce the social and juridical position of minors in Flanders and the French Community.

The Children’s Commissioner receives about 1200 questions and complaints a year, coming from parents, children and professionals. Furthermore they are independent spokespersons on parliamentary level and a voice for children and young people on a political forum where they are not represented giving policy recommendations.

Current Belgian issues they are working on are the legal position of minors in detention, the use of video conferences instead of face to face contacts in juvenile justice, the exclusion of non-accompanied minors in Belgian soccer youth teams, the use and meaning of unplanned visits by special youth care consultants and child poverty and social exclusion.

Vanobbergen concluded his remark with a call from children: they want to be heard and want to understand as much as adults do. They want to be taken seriously, have a voice and be able to participate. “Today, children are still too much seen as ‘not yet’, while it is so important to approach them as citizens, as participants at all domains of society.”

Doctor Dupont is both a children’s psychiatrist with a long experience and an art lover. Dr. Dupont believes that it is absolutely necessary for a child to have self-esteem and self-confidence in order to be aware of its rights. She is therefore confident that art can empower children. Art activates thinking, what can be achieved through art exceeds all expectations.
She emphasized that children are key stakeholders but also future entrepreneurs. Confronting the challenges of today's society, she indicated we need self-confidence, power of mind, determination, inspiration and innovation more than ever. The world is increasingly diverse and interconnected. Responsibility and social engagement are universal values and art can play a key role in the development of those qualities and can even take the lead.

To put this into practice, Dr. Dupont has put up a project called “Art for Wellbeing” to empower children through art, a key empowerment tool that should be accessible wherever children live. Art for Wellbeing will start by setting up several pilot projects in Belgium, where children can engage and collaborate with artists in different fields. A first artist who engaged to this project is Jeff Koons.

Dr. Dupont concluded by stating: “It’s not only important what can be done for the kids, but also what can be done by the kids. That’s what Art for Wellbeing is all about.”

Daniel Kropf is founding chair of the Universal Education Foundation, Learning for Wellbeing, a global partnership that brings together actors from all sectors of society to collaborate beyond their silos on the process of how each child and young person learns to realize their unique potential. Mr. Kropf indicated that through advocacy, inspiration, training and research, the Learning for Wellbeing partnership progressively wants to create an inclusive society that invites the contribution of each child and young person in which they learn to live meaningful, joyful and healthy lives.

Mr. Kropf’s foundation offers an integrative framework and process that encompasses learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together, giving a purpose to learning and creating a space that gathers different actors to collaborate beyond their silos, creating a common language towards a common agenda. Mr. Kropf called upon working together and building partnerships.

Koen Gonnissen, partner at Mentally Fit, urged the participants to look at sports to unlock the unique talents of every child in the world. Protecting a child is a must, but developing a child’s talents is just as important! After an international career as coach for top athletes, Gonnissen also specialized in training and coaching corporate athletes, teams, managers and executives. His experience in the sports world has enabled him to apply some of those physical, emotional and mental principles to the business world, especially in self-coaching, coaching and leadership.
Gonnissen gives a clear insight in the mechanisms of high sustained performance and what a leader needs today with the high pressure environments we live in. Gonnissen indicated that to develop your full potential, you should not only take IQ and EQ, but also your physical condition (PhQ) into account. He expressed the need to embed this into the education of kids!

Gonnissen emphasized that examples from sports heroes, artists, dancers, famous musicians,... can give children something to believe in and that they are an ultimate tool for children to get inspired.

Kids nowadays are too much inside playing aggressive computer games, or growing up in the middle of real time war themselves, while they need to be stimulated in a positive way. This leads indirectly or directly to aggression (cf last year island in Norway, or killings in the past in schools in USA, Belgium...).

The marketing on games is very misleading too! That is why, in cooperation with several world class athletes, Gonnissen is developing a content driven and positive game for all children on the planet: “Help, I am talented!” Using the metaphor of sports/music/dancing/... it is his dream to motivate kids to discover, stretch and make the best out of their talents. Mr. Gonnissen called upon partners to engage in his project.

MOVING FORWARD
# Agenda

3 December 2012  
Egmont Palace - Brussels

**Morning session – Presenting the Children’s Rights and Business Principles**  
Moderated by Iris Van der Veken, Chair Global Compact Network Belgium and Manager Corporate Affairs Global Rosy Blue  
Rapporteurs: Anita Househam (UN Global Compact Office) & Laura Mahieu (Rosy Blue, Global Compact LEAD Member)

*Location: Europazaal  
Open to Press until first coffee break*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Welcome by Ms. Iris Van der Veken, Chair of the GCB</td>
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<td>09:35</td>
<td>Address by HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium</td>
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<td>09:45</td>
<td>Keynote by Mr. Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign affairs, Trade and European Affairs</td>
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<td>10:00</td>
<td>Video message by Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General</td>
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<td>10:05</td>
<td>Introduction to the Principles</td>
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<td>10:05</td>
<td>2. Presentation of the Children’s Rights and Business Principles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Ms. Elisabeth Dahlin, Secretary-General, Save the Children Sweden</td>
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<td>2. Mr. Bo Viktor Nylund, Senior Advisor Corporate Social Responsibility, UNICEF</td>
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<td>3. Ms. Ursula Wythoven, General Counsel, United Nations Global Compact Office</td>
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<td>10:45</td>
<td>KAURI views on the principles, by Wouter Vermeulen- Chair Board Keuri</td>
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<td>11:00</td>
<td>COFFEE break</td>
<td>Location: Atrium &amp; Saks</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
<td>European Vision on the Principles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ms. Eida Moreno, Head of the Gender Equality and Human Dignity Department, Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe</td>
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<td>11:45</td>
<td>Children’s Rights are everyone’s business by Mr. Amit Bhansali, CEO Rosy Blue NV – Global Compact LEAD member</td>
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<td>12:05</td>
<td>The State of the World: Facts and Figures on Children’s Rights worldwide and in Belgium</td>
<td>Mr. Yves Willemot, Executive Director UNICEF Belgium</td>
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*With the support of the King Baudouin Foundation*
## APPENDIX

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<tr>
<th>12:20</th>
<th>Panel Discussion on the implementation of Children’s Rights and Business Principles &amp; Q&amp;A</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- BVBA32 – Anne Chapelle, CEO</td>
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<td>- Rosy Blue NV – Amit Bhansali, CEO</td>
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<td>- Solvay – Christian Jourquin, Honorary CEO</td>
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<td>- Studio 100 – Hans Bourlon, CEO</td>
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<td>- SNCB – Marc Descheemaeker, CEO</td>
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<td>- GlaxoSmithKline Vaccines – Pascal Lizin, Director External and Public Affairs</td>
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| 12:55 | Plenary session and Q&A                                                                 |

| 13:00 | LUNCH | Location: Atrium & Saks |

### Afternoon session — Implementing the Children’s Rights and Business Principles in Practice

**Moderated by Stefan Maes, Communication Director, VBO**

**Location: Europazaal**

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<tr>
<th>14:10</th>
<th>Video message: A call for action</th>
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<td>14:15</td>
<td>The current status of reporting by the corporate sector in Belgium on their involvement in Human Rights and Children’s Rights</td>
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<td>Mr. Harry Everaerts, Partner, Standard Assurance Services, Ernst &amp; Young</td>
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<td>14:25</td>
<td>Presentation of workbook, assessment and reporting tool</td>
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<td>Mr Bo Viktor Nylund, Senior Advisor Corporate Social Responsibility, UNICEF</td>
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<td>14:45</td>
<td>Results of the survey and implementation exercise of the Children’s Rights and Business Principles</td>
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<td>Prof. Dr. Luc Van Liedekerke, Antwerp Management School &amp; UA, BASF-Deloitte Chair on Sustainability;</td>
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<tr>
<th>15:10</th>
<th>The Principles in Practice</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. <strong>Ikea</strong> by Mr. Olivier Beraille, CEO IKEA Belgium</td>
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<td>2. <strong>Telenet</strong> by Ms. Marina De Moerlooze, Director Telenet Foundation</td>
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<td>3. <strong>Ferrero</strong> by Ms. Francesca Poggiiali, Corporate CSR and EU Affairs, Ferrero</td>
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| 15:45 | Plenary session and Q&A                                                                 |

| 16:10 | COFFEE Break | Location: Atrium & Saks |

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<tr>
<th>16:30</th>
<th>Panel discussion: A call for action in Belgium – a child’s perspective</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Mr. Bruno Vanobbergen – Children’s Rights Commissioner Flenders</td>
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<td>2. Mr. Bernard Devos – Children’s Rights Commissioner Wallonia</td>
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<td>3. Dr. Griet Dupont – Children’s Psychiatrist, 11 Lijnen Foundation</td>
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<td>4. Mr. Daniel Kropf – Founding Chair, Universal Education Foundation (Learning for Well-being)</td>
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<td>5. Mr. Keen Gaurlaen – Partner Mentally Fit, Lifeguard</td>
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<th>17:15</th>
<th>Concluding remarks</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Ms. Ursula Wynhoven, General Counsel, United Nations Global Compact Office</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mr. Jan de Grave, VP Corporate Office &amp; Sustainability at Telenet</td>
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| 17:30 | Network Drink | Location: Atrium & Saks |

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