

20 November 2018

**National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights (NAP) –
Monitoring corporate implementation of human rights due diligence**

Dear Sir or Madam,

As you know, the Federal Cabinet adopted the **National Action Plan (NAP) for Business and Human Rights (2016-2020)** in December 2016. The NAP is based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and provides a road map for their practical application. Its successful implementation is a major priority of the German Government. On behalf of the Interministerial Committee on Business and Human Rights, we would like to ask you and your company to contribute to this effort, also by participating in the NAP monitoring process.

Many German companies are carrying out human rights due diligence throughout their global supply and value chains. We want to see the commitment to human rights permanently incorporated into the governance principles and processes of all German companies. To this end, the German Government offers them a wide range of support measures.

The goal set out in the NAP is that, by the year 2020, at least half of all companies in Germany with more than 500 employees must prove they have integrated the core elements of human rights due diligence – as defined in Chapter III of the NAP – into their business processes. If by that time 50 percent of companies do not have such systems in place, further action will be considered, which may include legislative measures. The Government has developed a monitoring process, based on academic standards, that measures companies' progress towards this goal. The coalition agreement contains the following commitment: "If an effective and comprehensive review of the NAP in 2020 finds that the voluntary commitment of companies is insufficient, we will introduce appropriate legislation at the national level and advocate an EU-wide regulation."

The Professional Services Firm Ernst & Young has been commissioned to monitor the level of implementation, in a consortium with Sustain Consulting, Adelphi consult and Focusright.

In May 2019 and again in early 2020, on behalf of the German Government, Ernst & Young will get in touch with a representative sample of companies and ask them to fill out an online questionnaire. Your company may be selected for this purpose.

We ask that all of the contacted companies participate in the NAP monitoring process.

A high response rate will be crucial for relevant results and optimal conclusions. Valuable insight is also obtained from responses by companies that have not yet fully implemented the core elements of human rights due diligence. Strict anonymity will be guaranteed during the evaluation of all data, and care will be taken to ensure that findings cannot be linked to specific companies.

More information is available on the German Government's NAP information portal:

www.wirtschaft-menschenrechte.de

The portal gives a comprehensive overview of all support measures that can help companies meet their responsibility to respect human rights, both in Germany and abroad.

We are convinced that respect for human rights in global supply and value chains is an important part of effective risk management, and that this boosts the long-term competitiveness of Germany's economy. A successful NAP and strong human rights credibility of German enterprises strengthen not only the Made in Germany brand, but also people's confidence in open markets.

Many thanks in advance for your support.

Yours faithfully,

Heiko Maas
Federal Minister for Foreign
Affairs and Member of the
German Bundestag

Olaf Scholz
Federal Minister
of Finance

Peter Altmaier
Federal Minister
for Economic Affairs and Energy
and Member of the German
Bundestag

Hubertus Heil
Federal Minister of Labour
and Social Affairs and
Member of the German
Bundestag

Gerd Müller
Federal Minister for Economic
Cooperation and Development and
Member of the German Bundestag