

## Call for Contributions for a Multi-Disciplinary Group Meeting

### Human Trafficking & Supply Chains: Corporate Responsibility Beyond Transparency Legislation

New Delhi, India, 18-19 November 2019

#### Organizers:

*Dr. Hila Shamir (Tel Aviv University, Israel)*

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#### *Theme and Scope*

We are pleased to announce the call for contributions for this Multi-Disciplinary Small Group Meeting on Human Trafficking and Supply Chains: Corporate Responsibility Beyond Transparency Legislation. Issues of modern slavery and human trafficking attracted unprecedented policy and academic attention in the past two decades. Since the adoption of the Palermo Protocol and the enactment of the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in the year 2000, 168 countries around the world changed their laws to reflect their commitment to end modern slavery.<sup>1</sup> The global response focused on the 3P's approach (prevention, protection and prosecution) set out in the Palermo Protocol with greatest emphasis on criminalisation of offenders, criminal law enforcement, strict border control, and ex-post human rights assistance to identified victims of modern slavery, including human trafficking. Significant amounts of resources are dedicated to anti-trafficking work globally. Recent research puts forward a modest estimate that in the past decade more than 120 million US dollars were spent annually on funding anti-trafficking activities by OECD countries.<sup>2</sup> Despite impressive commitments and significant resources dedicated to the issues there are no clear signs that the instances and victims of human trafficking decreased globally. For example, according to the US Trafficking in Persons Report in 2018, out of the estimated 20.9

<sup>1</sup> UNODC, GLOBAL REPORT ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, 45 (2018).

<sup>2</sup> Michael Dottridge, Editorial: *How Is The Money To Combat Human Trafficking Spent*, ANTI TRAFFICKING REVIEW 3, 1-14 (2014).

million people in situation of modern day slavery<sup>3</sup> a mere 85,613 were identified as trafficked persons worldwide, and out of these, a mere 11,009 were working outside the sex industry.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, agreement is emerging among scholars and policymakers that the traditional tools used to combat human trafficking fall short in contending with the phenomenon. The reason for this, research suggests, lies in the fact that the traditional anti-trafficking tools do not deal with the structural conditions of contemporary local labour markets and global production networks. As a result, they assist only a small number of individuals out of the multitudes recognised as trafficked persons. Despite the growing recognition for a labour approach to human trafficking, very few alternative tools to combat human trafficking entered the ‘classic’ anti-trafficking toolkit. The shortcomings associated with traditional anti-trafficking strategies have led to the emergence and development of a new anti-trafficking strategy, with non-state actors leading the charge, focusing on Corporate Responsibility (CR) and the role of business in ending severe forms of labour market exploitations. The turn of anti-trafficking policy and activism towards the role of business as well, has led to a convergence between two thriving human rights agendas that seek to transform global markets: anti-trafficking efforts, on the one hand, and CR initiatives on the other.

However, while CR does in principle seek to address the market structures that enable exploitation, key characteristics of CR seem to make it better geared to preserving rather than transforming current exploitative global structures of recruitment, hiring and employment of workers. Reliance on private and voluntary regulatory schemes - dependent on the goodwill of corporations to insist on workers’ rights protections - seems less promising. Traditionally, such transformations occurred only following long struggles and strong collective action by unions. Workers’ rights improvements and weaker control over the workforce tends to increase labour costs throughout the supply/value chain, and accordingly increase prices. This raises significant questions regarding the potential of modern slavery related CR initiatives to

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<sup>3</sup> INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, GLOBAL ESTIMATE OF FORCED LABOUR: RESULTS AND METHODOLOGY (2012).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT, TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT, 38 (2019).

bring about transformation. Ample empirical research support this analysis, showing that despite extensive CR activity, private anti-trafficking initiatives in supply/value chains have not much succeeded in securing and ensuring labour rights, either because they are only partial and superficial, or because costs related to ensuring labour rights are pushed down the supply chains. This at times results in pushing labour trafficking practices down the chain, usually to more unorganized segments of the market, making it invisible and hard to further track and deal with. In this respect, transparency legislations of recent years are attempts to provide some harder edges to the soft law characteristics of CR.

In recent years several governments opted to enhance state regulatory involvement in supply/value chain management by adopting mandatory corporate social disclosure legislation, and many others are considering following suit. Aimed at improving transparency and accountability in supply/value chains, these laws require companies above a certain size to publicly disclose their measures for addressing severe forms of labour exploitation. Leading pieces of such legislation are the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2012, Brazil's MTE Decree No. 540/2004, the French Duty of Corporate Vigilance Law of 2017, the Australian Modern Slavery Act of 2018, and indeed the UK Modern Slavery Act of 2015.

Despite increased corporate activity to combat human trafficking and modern slavery produced by the such legislation, there is little evidence of actual transformation in working conditions in most affected sectors. The question that researchers, as well as policy makers and other concerned actors in the field ask is, whether, if and how can the resources, energies, and good intentions within this industrial complex translate into effective policies and sectoral and corporate practices that will improve workers' working conditions down the supply/value chain?

The aims of our small group meeting is twofold: 1) to convene a multi-disciplinary international group of scholar, from developed, developing and emerging economies, to engage in a conversation about the present and future of CR in the struggle against modern slavery, human trafficking in global and domestic supply/value chains; and 2) to advance our conceptual and empirical knowledge on the issues of modern slavery,

human trafficking and corporate responsibility in global and domestic supply/value chains.

Academic scholars across different disciplines – including law, sociology, economic geography, politics, business and economics, international relations, international development - will engage with the potential and limits of corporate responsibility, transparency legislation, and “harder” forms of regulation to combat human trafficking and modern slavery in global and local supply chains, paying particular attention to the challenges and opportunities such an approach creates in the context of developing countries and emerging economies. It is important for us to hold the conference in India and draw into the conversation scholars from developed, developing, and emerging economies. We hope to create space for productive dialogues among scholars along the following themes (indicative list):

1. Evolution over time of global and local understanding of human trafficking and modern-day slavery: we are interested in historical perspectives on the issues of human trafficking in developed and developing countries, in or outside of the context of corporate responsibility.
2. Issues and challenges in dealing with human trafficking and modern-day slavery in *domestic* supply/value chains, and how do they match or differ from issues and challenges in global supply/value chains?
3. The power and limits of different forms of regulation – from private (soft law) regulation through multi-stakeholder initiatives, transparency legislation, and “harder” forms of regulation. We are particularly interested in what “works” and what does not work – studies of existing best practices in business and civil society with special attention to multi-stakeholder initiatives.
4. The business challenges and opportunities to combat modern slavery in general, and human trafficking in particular, in complex multi-layered international and local supply/value chains.
5. The role of labour intermediaries in global and local supply/value chains.
6. CR implementation: how to monitor workers’ rights on the ground in complex multi-layered international and local supply/value chains? We are particularly interested in the roles played by different types of actors such as national

inspectories, international organizations, corporate actors (including accreditation and certification companies), unions, NGOs and civil society, in “enforcing” corporate responsibility on the ground, as well as the unique weaknesses and strengths of different actors.

7. CR and workers’ agency and voice: the role of unions and alt-labor in initiating, monitoring and sustaining CR in this field? Is CR a threat or an opportunity for workers’ agency and voice? The potential, opportunities and limits, for worker driven social responsibility or supply/value chain collective bargaining.
8. The role of consumers in pressuring corporations to combat human trafficking and modern slavery, including sectoral differences in consumer voice (e.g. construction vs. food) and differences between developed and emerging economies.
9. The role of governments as market actors – procurement, labour standards and anti-trafficking.
10. Are all corporations alike? Corporate responsibility in the developed and emerging economies and of corporations in different scale.
11. The knowledge gap: can technology (artificial Intelligence, blockchain etc.) assist in bridging the knowledge gap between lead companies and MNCs and their suppliers in different tiers? Can technology offer a solution?
12. How do we reconcile cross cultural tensions and value pluralism in the meeting of human trafficking and modern-day slavery norms with different contexts.

## *Event Structure*

**Two separate but related events on the topic will be organized to ensure enriching discussions and wider participation:**

- An academic event on 18 and 19 November, 2019;
- A Policy & Practitioners event on 22 November 2019, as part of Centre for Responsible Business' (CRB) Annual Flagship Conference: India & Sustainability Standards Conference & International Dialogues (ISS 2019) - *see more details about the conference at the end of the document*).

## *Application Modalities & Deadlines*

This call for papers is for the academic event. Participants of the academic working group are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in CRB's Annual Conference ISS2019 as well.

## **Submission Process and Deadlines**

- Please send us a short abstract (500-1000 words) along with a short (approx. two page) CV of the author/presenter until **31 August 2019** by email to Dr. Hila Shamir ([hshamir@tauex.tau.ac.il](mailto:hshamir@tauex.tau.ac.il)), Dr. Bimal Arora ([b.arora1@aston.ac.uk](mailto:b.arora1@aston.ac.uk)) and Dr. Shilpi Banerjee ([sbanerjee@adjunct.aud.edu](mailto:sbanerjee@adjunct.aud.edu)).
- Full papers are due for submission by **31 October 2019**.
- For all informal queries related to the small group meeting, proposed topics and potential fit, contact Dr. Shilpi Banerjee [sbanerjee@adjunct.aud.edu](mailto:sbanerjee@adjunct.aud.edu); or Dr. Hila Shamir [hshamir@tauex.tau.ac.il](mailto:hshamir@tauex.tau.ac.il).
- To know more about CRB's conference and explore partnership and participation possibilities and opportunities, please email *Ms. Nandini Sharma* at [conference@c4rb.in](mailto:conference@c4rb.in).

## *Funding*

We have a small budget to support travel and accommodation for scholars whose papers will be accepted, and who do not have institutional support for their travels. Please indicate at the time of expression of interest if you also need financial support to cover the travel and accommodation costs.

### *Organizers Contact Details*

To express your interest in participating in the small group meeting, please contact any member of the organizing team.

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### **Annexure: ISS 2019 Conference**

#### **Market Dynamics & Social Dilemmas of Promoting Sustainable Business**

The Multi-Disciplinary Small Group Meeting and Academic Dialogues on Human Trafficking and Supply Chains: Corporate Responsibility Beyond Legislation on 18-19 November 2019 is planned in conjunction with **India and Sustainability Standards: International Dialogues and Conference 2019 (ISS)** (<http://sustainabilitystandards.in/>) in New Delhi, India, scheduled from **20-22 November, 2019** at **Eros Hotel, Nehru Place, New Delhi, India**.

### *Conference Information*

The ISS is a well-established national and international dialogues platform on business sustainability and has been successful in bringing key national and international stakeholders together on sustainability/sustainable business/SDGs issues over the last five years, attended by over 700 delegates. It has consistently worked towards pushing and propelling the agenda of sustainable business by engaging with multiple stakeholders through a consensus and evidence-based approach. Designed and hosted by the Centre for Responsible Business (CRB), the Conference has witnessed action-oriented deliberations on a variety of thematic and sector specific issues on sustainability – drawing the attention of Indian and international policy actors,

government agencies, standard setters, large and small businesses, industry associations, civil society, academia, and media agencies.

For 2019 conference, our endeavour is to convene a diverse set of stakeholders to understand and deliberate on the opportunities and challenges of promoting sustainable business in an emerging economy like India. Balancing the aspirations of a demographically young and expanding economy on one hand and meeting the needs of the underserved on the other hand is a complex challenge. Through our discussions, we aim to address these challenges and move the needle on the issues.

### *Conference Structure*

#### Plenary Inaugural Day (20 November, 2019)

TIMINGS	SESSIONS
0800 – 0930hrs	Registration & Welcome Tea/Coffee
0930 – 1130hrs	<i>Inaugural Plenary: Market Dynamics and Social Dilemmas of Promoting Sustainable E</i>
1130 – 1300hrs	<i>High-Level Panel 1: Creating a Market for Sustainable Enterprises and Products</i>
1300 – 1400hrs	<i>Networking Lunch</i>
1400 – 1530hrs	<i>High-Level Panel 2: Bringing Paradigm Shift in Financial Sector to promote Sustainabi</i>
1530 - 1600hrs	<i>Networking &amp; High-Tea</i>
1600 – 1730hrs	<i>High-Level Panel 3: Business Solutions to Developmental Challenges in Emerging Econ</i>
1730 – 2000hrs	<i>Evening Event (Book Launch) followed by Cocktails and Dinner</i>

#### Second & Third Day Breakouts (21 & 22 November, 2019)

Time Slots	Day 2 (21 <sup>st</sup> November)	Day 3 (22 <sup>nd</sup> November)
0900 – 0930hrs	Registration	Registration
0930 – 1100hrs	Plenary Session (Co-hosted by Lead Partners)	Plenary Session (Co-hosted by Lead Partners)
1100 – 1200hrs	Tea Break	Tea Break
1200 – 1330hrs	4 Parallel Sectoral or Thematic Session (Co-hosted by CRB's Old and New Partners)	4 Parallel Sectoral or Thematic Session (Co-hosted by CRB's Old and New Partners)
1330 – 1430hrs	Networking Lunch	Networking Lunch
1430 – 1600hrs	4 Parallel Sectoral or Thematic Session	4 Parallel Sectoral or Thematic Session

Time Slots	Day 2 (21 <sup>st</sup> November)	Day 3 (22 <sup>nd</sup> November)
	(Co-hosted by CRB's Old and New Partners)	(Co-hosted by CRB's Old and New Partners)
1600 – 1630hrs	Tea Break	Tea Break
1630 – 1800hrs	4 Parallel Sectoral or Thematic Session (Co-hosted by CRB's Old and New Partners)	4 Parallel Sectoral or Thematic Session (Co-hosted by CRB's Old and New Partners)

***Some of the Featured Regular Partners and Participants Include:***

**Academia:**

University of Michigan (USA), University of Manchester (UK), Schulich School of Business (Canada), Aston University (UK), University of Basel (Switzerland), Deakin University (Australia), IIM Bangalore, IIM Lucknow, IIM Shillong, Xavier Labour Research Institute (XLRI), SP Jain Institute of Management Research (India), Birla Institute of Management and Technology (India), OP Jindal Global University (India), TERI University (India), AMITY University (India), National Institute of Fashion Technology (India).

**International Organisations as Partners:** C&A Foundation, WWF India, ISEAL Alliance, Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS), Green Electronics Council (GEC), Global Infrastructure Basel (GIB Foundation), Rainforest Alliance, Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), Responsible Mica Initiative (RMI), Terre des Hommes (TdH Netherlands), CSR Europe, IDRC Canada, Dutch Embassy (India), GIZ, Global March Against Child Labour, Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Goodweave, Save The Children, Traidcraft, One Planet Network, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

**UN Agencies:** UNICEF, UNDP, UNIDO, UN Environment, International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group), International Trade Centre (ITC, Geneva).

**Government of India and Agencies:** Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Ministry of MSMEs, Ministry of Mines, Department of Consumer Affairs, IRCTC, Quality Council of India (QCI).

**Conference Partners:** C&A Foundation; Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA); Global Reporting Initiative (GRI); Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS), Social Accountability International (SAI); ISEAL Alliance; Green Electronics Council (GEC); GIB Foundation; Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC); Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production (WRAP); SHIFT Project; GIZ; Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise, University of Michigan; University of Manchester; Aston India Centre for Applied Research (AICAR), Aston Business School; Sustainable Corporate Responsibility (SCORE); University of Basel; WWF; Netherlands Embassy in India; UNICEF; IDH; Forest Stewardship Council (FSC); IIM Lucknow; PwC; IIM Indore; Management Development Institute (MDI); National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Delhi; International Tourism Partnership (ITP); Climate Disclosure Standards Board (CDSB); Foundation for MSME Clusters (FMC).