

# *ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ESIL INTEREST GROUP ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS 2020/2021*

Coordinating Committee: **Dr. Mara Tignino** (University of Geneva), **Prof. Angelica Bonfanti** (University of Milan), **Prof. Belen Olmos Giupponi** (Kingston University), **Dr. Mihaela Maria Barnes** (Visiting Fellow, Lauterpacht Centre for International Law, Cambridge University)

The Interest Group on Business and Human Rights (IG BHR) is pleased to submit this report to our members and stakeholders. The membership of the IG BHR remains strong 368 members at the time of writing this Report. The Coordinating Committee is composed of: Prof. Belen Olmos Giupponi, Dr. Mara Tignino, Prof. Angelica Bonfanti and Dr. Mihaela Maria Barnes.

## **1 Activities during 2020**

The Annual Conference of the European Society of International Law was supposed to have taken place in Stockholm in September 2020, but as a result of the COVID – 19 pandemic it was postponed to September 2021. In lieu of the usual ESIL Annual Conference Workshop, the Coordinating Committee organised an Online Workshop titled “Business and Human Rights during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Impacts, Responses and Future Implications.” The Online Workshop was held via Zoom and was well-attended, with close to 100 participants. We would like to thank all the participants – in particular our speakers – for their efforts: Dr. Olena Uvarova, Prof. Pierre Thielboerger, Timeela Manandhar, Dr. Elena Pribytkova, Dr. Deborah Russo, Stephanie Triefus and Dr. Talya Şans Uçaryılmaz. The Welcome Remarks were delivered by Prof. Makane Moïse Mbengue (University of Geneva). The Keynote Speech was delivered by Prof. Michael Addo (University of Notre Dame, London).

## **2 Activities during 2021**

Given the remaining uncertainties concerning travel requirements in many parts of the world, the Coordinating Committee took the decision to transition the Workshop that was supposed to be organised on the 8th of September 2021, in Stockholm, on the occasion of the 16th Annual Conference of the European Society of International Law (“Changes in International Lawmaking: Actors, Processes, Impact”) to an online format. The Online Workshop was held via Zoom and was well-attended, with close to 70 participants. We would like to thank all the participants – particularly our speakers – for their efforts: Dr. Emanuela Orlando, Professor Kishanthi Parella, Professor Klara Polackova van der Ploeg, Professor Anna Asseeva and Mihaela Buzenche. The Keynote Speech was delivered by Professor Larry Catá Backer (Pennsylvania State University).

## **3 Agenda for the remaining of 2021 and 2022**

The Agenda of the IG BHR for the remaining of 2021/2022 will focus on the following priorities:

- Organisation of the 2022 ESIL Annual Conference Workshop in Utrecht, the Netherlands which will have the theme “In/Ex-clusiveness of International Law.”
- Increasing the visibility of the IG at the next UN Forum on Business and Human Rights.
- The Coordinating Committee has decided to open the website of the IG BHR for participation from our members. We welcome contributions in the form of short blog pieces, book reviews, reports from conferences, research seminars and other similar items which will be posted on <https://igbusinessandhumanrights.wordpress.com/>
- Support Members’ activities in the field of Business and Human Rights.
- Increasing the visibility of the IG BHR by using social media platforms such as Twitter for the posting of news and events.

#### 4 Members’ Queries and Participation

We welcome proposals from our Members for the organisation of conferences, seminar, research fora and other similar events concerning Business and Human Rights generally. If you have any other queries or any of the members of our IG would like to make any proposals in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact any of the Members of the Coordinating Committee by email:

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