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# **VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES ON SECURITY & HUMAN RIGHTS**

Geneva, Montreux Document Forum, 6-7 June 2018



# What are the Voluntary Principles?

**The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR) are an initiative by Governments, NGOs, and companies that provide guidance to extractives companies on maintaining the safety and security of their operations within an operating framework that ensures respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.**





# Assumptions and premises:

- **States have to protect and promote human rights**
- **Companies have to respect human rights (due diligence)**
- **Companies need security**
- **Companies can have significant influence on host country governments, economies, communities, and civil society**



# The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

- **Response to international criticism:** companies' security leads to human rights risks for communities
- **Guidelines for companies:** respect for human rights in protection of company facilities
- **Multi stakeholder platform:** dialogue, joint problem solving, capacity building, best practices on security and human rights
- **Focus on respect for civil and political rights:** right to life, freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment



# Three pillars : governments, companies, NGOs

- VPs established in 2000 through multi stakeholder dialogue, including UK and US governments, mining and energy companies, and leading human rights NGOs.
- Current membership: 10 governments, 13 NGOs, 31 companies, and 7 observers.
- Participating governments: Australia, Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Ghana, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, UK, USA
- Switzerland chair 2013-2014 / 2019-2020
- Current chair : U.K.



# The Voluntary principles provide guidance on three issues:

1. **Risk assessment:** rule of law, conflict analysis
2. **Engagement with public security forces:** screen human rights records, conduct trainings
3. **Relations with private security services:** include VPs in contracts, report allegations of abuse





# 1. Risk assessment :

- Review **human rights records** of public and private security forces.
- Evaluate the **rule of law**, capacity of prosecuting authority and judiciary.
- Conduct **conflict analysis**; root causes and nature.
- Examine **equipment transfers**



## 2. Engagement with public security forces :

- Screen **human rights records** of security personnel.
- Conduct human rights **training programs** for security.
- **Consult stakeholders** on their experiences with security forces.







### 3. Relations with private security services

- Include the VPs in security **contracts and agreements.**
- Convey guidelines for **use of force/force** proportional to the threat.
- Record and **report allegations** of abuses.





# What is expected from companies in implementing the VPs

- Comprehensive risk assessment
- Incorporation into project documents
- Building internal awareness
- Training security providers
- Building relationships with security providers
- Consulting with local communities
- Recruiting security guards from local communities
- Monitoring of security arrangements
- Reporting process of alleged Human Rights violation



# All participants are expected to:

- Proactively implement or assist in the implementation of the VPSHR.
- Attend plenary meetings and, other extraordinary and in-country meetings.
- Communicate publicly on efforts to implement or assist in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles.
- Engage in continuing dialogue with participants including to seek to resolve any concerns about the performance of a participant.
- Contribute to further developing the Principles to ensure their continuing relevance and efficacy.



# Why implement the VPs ?

- Comply with the State duty to protect human rights
- Achieve human rights and development related objectives (e.g. rule of law, stable investment environment)
- Enhance human rights compliance of security forces and prevent abuses
- Increase cooperation and problem solving among stakeholders at local and national level
- Improve companies' risk assessment and mitigation, community relations and management of social conflicts,
- Prevent corporate complicity in abuses and reputational risks



# Relationship with the Montreux Document

- State regulation of the private security sectors contributes to both implementation of the Montreux Document and of the Voluntary Principles
- The International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers, which is based on the Montreux Document, helps implementing the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.
- Both initiatives help the state implementing its duty to protect human rights, by setting government expectations towards the private sector in conflict/complex environments.

# Knowledge Hub

Web platform to share guidance, tools and case studies

News Feed for new resources, projects and tools

Newsletter on uploads, Toolkit updates and related news

[www.securityhumanrightshub.org](http://www.securityhumanrightshub.org)

ADDRESSING SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES IN COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTS KNOWLEDGE HUB

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### Overview

Companies working in complex environments face many challenges around their areas of operations. These challenges can undermine the safety and security of their operations and staff while also affecting the human rights of local communities. Business and human rights, security sector reform (SSR) as well as the wider security and development communities have developed - at times

### News/Feeds

22.11.2017

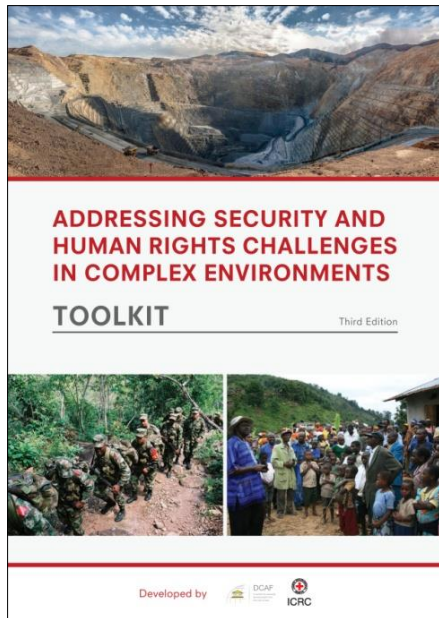


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# Toolkit



Good practices and recommendations **structured around real-life security and human rights challenges**

Chapter on working with private security providers **promotes good practices from MD and ICoC**

Recommendations promote collaboration between governments, IOs, companies and CSOs.

Available in **English, Spanish and French**. A **Mandarin version** will be ready in July 2018



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# Challenges ahead :

- Increase number of government participants, in particular from resource-rich countries
- Implement verification

[www.voluntaryprinciples.org](http://www.voluntaryprinciples.org)

