

## C-Suite Briefing Document

### Addressing Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Supply Chains

#### Executive Summary

Human trafficking and forced labour pose significant legal, reputational, and financial risks to global businesses. As leaders, it is imperative to align corporate practices with international norms and legal frameworks to prevent, mitigate, and remediate such risks. This briefing document outlines key strategies based on UN normative frameworks, including the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) (UNGPs), the [ILO Forced Labour Protocol](#), the [UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

#### Background and Context

- The elimination of human trafficking and forced labour is a central challenge for the international community.
- Human trafficking and forced labour are not confined to some countries or sectors, they are a universal issue and occur both behind closed doors and in plain sight.
- This risk is present throughout the procurement cycle and is being addressed from the level of policy through to practice.
- The UN stands ready – with its suppliers – to engage effectively on this risk and to address both the direct and indirect risks identified in its global supply chains.

#### Business Imperatives

1. **Legal Compliance:**
  - a. **Governments** are introducing and tightening legislation to address the risk of human trafficking in Supply Chains
  - b. **The International Community** has introduced requirements to address the risk of human trafficking and forced labour in their supply chains. [UN Security Council Resolution 2388](#) requires the UN to address the risk of human trafficking and forced labour in its supply chains.
2. **Reputational Risk:** Consumer and investor expectations demand ethical sourcing and transparency.
3. **Operational Stability:** Ethical supply chains mitigate disruptions, boycotts, and sanctions.
4. **Market Access:** Compliance with human rights standards is increasingly required for global trade partnerships.

#### Supplying to the UN: Key Expectations and Requirements

If you are currently a UN supplier or interested to become a supplier to the UN, you will be requested to comply with both the UN Supplier Code of Conduct and General Conditions of Contract through the full term of your contract for the provisions of goods/services or works.

This includes the following:

- ✓ The UN expects its suppliers to implement the process of human rights due diligence as set out in the UNGPs. Concrete actions can include:
  - Embedding human rights due diligence in corporate governance frameworks
  - Establishing a corporate policy on ethical supply chains
  - Designating a senior executive responsible for human rights compliance

- ✓ Consistent with the UNGPs, suppliers are also expected to exercise any leverage they have over the behaviour of other commercial entities in its supply chains. Concretely, actions can include:
  - Conducting risk assessments to identify high-risk regions and suppliers.
  - Implementing robust supplier screening and audit mechanisms.
  - Requiring suppliers to adhere to the UN Supplier Code of Conduct
  - Responsible disengagement from non-compliant suppliers.
  - Publicly report on human rights due diligence efforts
- ✓ The UN expects its suppliers to prohibit forced or compulsory labour in all its forms and not engage in activities which increase the vulnerability of workers to forced labour. Concretely actions can include:
  - Ensuring fair labour recruitment practices in their supply chain.
  - Establishing grievance mechanisms accessible to workers.
  - Supporting victims through remediation programs
- ✓ The UN expects its suppliers to not engage in any activity related to human trafficking or which increases vulnerability to human trafficking.
- ✓ UN suppliers are expected to disclose to the UN any investigation, inquiry, administrative or judicial procedure initiated against them in connection with the standards included in the UN Supplier Code of Conduct

Addressing human trafficking and forced labour in supply chains is not only a legal obligation but also a corporate responsibility. Whilst the challenge set out by the UN in addressing this global risk is complex in nature, there are very valuable opportunities for suppliers who invest in addressing this risk with the UN and in working together it will ensure risks are being monitored, mitigated and where identified, remediated effectively. You now have an opportunity to show leadership in responsible business conduct.

## Useful Resources:

### UN Normative Frameworks for Corporate Action

1. UN Security Council Resolution 2388 (2017) [Resolution 2388 \(2017\)](#) /
2. [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights \(UNGPs\)](#)
3. [ILO Forced Labour Protocol](#)
4. [UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol](#)
5. [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)
6. UNODC Global Trafficking in Persons Reporting and Statistics (GLOTiP) [Trafficking in Persons](#)
7. ILO Labour Statistics [The leading source of labour statistics - ILOSTAT](#)