

Report - A joint EIRIS, CRT Japan, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre Event Introducing the Proposal of "Global Human Rights Performance Benchmark"

Date	Tuesday, July 15, 2014 15:30-17:15
Venue	Lambuth Hall, Kwansei Gakuin University, Tokyo Marunouchi Campus Sapia Tower 10th Floor, 1-7-12 Marunouchi Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
Organizer	Caux Round Table Japan, EIRIS Business and Human Rights Resource Centre

On July 15th, 2014, Caux Round Table Japan held a conference to introduce the proposal of EIRIS (Ethical Investment Research and Information Service) to integrate a global human rights performance benchmark. 48 people participated in this conference and received an overview of the way it is pretended to integrate this global benchmark by Peter Webster, CEO of EIRIS and also some remarks to the importance of these initiatives by Masaru Arai, Chairman of SIF-Japan and Saul Takahashi, Representative in Japan of the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre which is a partner organization on the project for a global human rights performance benchmark.

The conference began with an introduction by Masaru Arai, Chairman of SIF-Japan who briefly exposed the need to participate in a global initiative of such an important scope, enhancing the need for measurement on the implementation of a strategy for the respect and remedy of human rights. After Arai's speech, Saul Takahashi, Representative in Japan of the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, commented on the subject and highlighted the importance of the initiative for the advancement on human rights and business but also the importance of such information for the organization that he represents in Japan.

Peter Webster, CEO of EIRIS, firstly introduced the organization and highlighted the importance of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights on clearly dividing the responsibility of Governments and Companies on the "Protect, Respect and Remedy" framework as a floor that allows the idea of a benchmark of corporate human rights performance bringing

the benefits of competition and transparency. More information about the process to achieve the benchmark and other key elements of the proposal can be found in the presentation annexed at the end of this report. Something really important is the engagement with stakeholders since every group (investors, companies and civil society) have its own expectations and an idea on how this benchmark should work and the outcomes that could enhance the human rights performance in business.

After the introduction of a proposal for a global human rights performance benchmark, Hiroshi Ishida, Executive Director of CRT Japan, presented the Guide for Investors on Business and Human Rights “Investing the Rights Way”. This document is intended to foster outreach and dialogue with the mainstream investment community on the importance of the business and human rights agenda. You may find a copy of the document on the following link:

Responding to some of the attendants to the seminar Peter Webster clarified that it is not intended to create a questionnaire for the benchmark but a simple list of broad headings including: Policies and commitments, risks identified and managed, management systems to implement and report on policies, remedies when things go wrong, scope of policies and systems and external collaborations; thinking of this as “CDP for human rights”.

Finally three questions were formulated to the attendants in order to verify the pertinence of the proposal: Are we right to think that human rights are going to be for higher consideration in the future? Are we right to think that the benchmark will drive internal focus within the companies? Are investors an important driver for human rights considerations for companies? Most of the participants responded positively to the previous questions.

Caux Round Table Japan will be working closely with EIRIS to find new ways of collaboration and development of tools to enhance human rights performance, Ishida concluded.