

SUMMARY OF BOOK PROPOSAL
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION SECTION OF BUSINESS LAW

Working Title: Building Responsible Businesses: A Guide to Counseling Clients on Fulfilling Human Rights Responsibilities

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The book is intended to be a comprehensive introduction to the key topics relating to understanding how businesses can effectively fulfill their emerging responsibilities to their stakeholders and society in general relating to respect for universally recognized human rights. The book will be an invaluable first resource for attorneys and other professionals involved in counseling their internal and external clients on how human rights should be taken into account in day-to-day operational activities and in transactional situations. While much has been written in the academic and policy worlds regarding whether or not businesses have done as much as they should to promote respect for human rights, there is little in the way of practical guidance on what steps should be taken. The proposed publication will provide step-by-step advice covering a essential subjects such as voluntary and legal standards, development of policies and commitments, human rights due diligence, remediation, governance and management, engagement, responsible supply chain management, developing a human rights compliance program, human rights issues in basic transactions and duties and responsibilities of lawyers and law firms. In addition, the proposed publication will include a bibliography of resources that readers can use to develop and maintain their own library on business and human rights; checklists, questionnaires and other practice tools; and cases studies of how businesses have attempted to make a positive difference in protecting civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Each chapter in the book will identify and explain the relevant current issues based on domestic and international experience and will provide readers with references to the important laws, regulations and voluntary standards that need to be understood in counseling clients, developing internal processes, engaging with stakeholders and preparing reports and disclosures. The book will also include introduction/definitional matters; relevant laws and regulations (domestic and foreign); widely recognized voluntary standards; governance and compliance aspects, including board oversight and internal organizational structures; disclosure requirements; risk mitigation tactics; opportunities for innovation and organizational performance improvements; practice points/action items (perhaps a “Top 6” feature across all chapters); case studies/anecdotes, which may be based on content provided by experts through interviews and e-mail questionnaires; peer benchmarking; a bibliography of resources; and checklists, questionnaires and other practice tools including “mock” presentations to directors (e.g., slide decks) on topics to be covered in the proposed publication.

The proposed table of contents for the book will include chapters on the evolving relationship of business and human rights; international human rights law, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other related standards developed

by intergovernmental bodies; human rights policies and commitments; assessment of human rights impacts; integration and actions; measurement and tracking; communications and reporting; remediation; governance and management; engagement; rights at work: human rights and labor practices; responsible supply chain management; businesses' impacts on human rights; discrimination and protection of vulnerable groups; human rights considerations in common business transactions; sector guidance and roles and responsibilities of lawyers and law firms.