

H.E. António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, NY 10017
USA

30 June 2022

Dear Secretary-General,

I am pleased to confirm that the Royal Institute of International Affairs ('Chatham House') reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robin Niblett".

Dr Robin Niblett KCMG

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Description of Actions

As a leading international affairs research and convening institute, Chatham House acknowledges the influence we can have in helping governments and societies build a sustainably secure, prosperous and just world. The ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact are integral to this work.

In the two-year period since our commitment to the UNGC, Chatham House has successfully transitioned to a remote model during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also been able to continue to be a trusted and topical space for convening, albeit virtually. Since March 2020, over 150 private and public virtual events have been held including conferences, roundtables, research briefings, and workshops. In a disrupted world, we regularly hosted international events and conferences with more than 200 participants. Events have managed to maintain high levels of inclusivity, interaction and participant engagement, and security. Chatham House has also continued to deliver confidential briefings and hold high-level bilateral meetings during the UK lockdown.

Chatham House is making particular efforts to directly engage with the general public and communicate its research in inclusive and engaging formats. In 2020 the Institute had 35,366 media mentions: a 10% increase from 2019. Our twitter account has over 229,000 followers, complementing our in-house podcast series and publications. With this profile we provide insight and develop policy recommendations targeted internationally at policymakers, academic experts, media and social influencers, civil society and the private sector.

Our work makes a clear contribution to the progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2: Zero Hunger; SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being; SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy; SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production; SDG 13: Climate Action; and SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

Our centenary year in 2020 provided the perfect opportunity to refocus on three ‘second century goals’:

- **Sustainable and equitable growth** - Design pathways to sustainable growth that protect the planet and reduce inequalities within and between countries.
- **Peaceful and thriving societies** - Promote the rule of law over the rule of force, so as to reduce levels of human insecurity, enhance resilience and prevent large-scale conflict.
- **Accountable and inclusive governance** - Enable greater political accountability and more inclusive governance at global, regional and sectoral levels.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that Chatham House has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles in the last two years.

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Human Rights

One of Chatham House's three second century goals is to promote the rule of law over the rule of force, and throughout the history of the institute our research in international public law has long been acclaimed. We combine careful legal analysis with practical understanding of complex and fast-moving contexts such as social media and humanitarian response. Research findings are considered and even adopted by a range of prominent actors including governments, legal practitioners, companies, NGOs and academia.

Our International Law Programme has contributed to thought leadership on rights-based climate litigation, most notably in a November 2021 briefing paper that examined several case studies of climate-related litigation brought before national courts and international bodies. Researchers showed how activists are challenging both inaction on climate change in their countries, but also governments' failure to honour commitments and strategies which in themselves could also contribute to human rights violations. Highlighting how this trend is only likely to grow, the paper found that this litigation is also helping to bridge gaps between international agreements and national-government action.

Another strand of research looked at the impact of counterterrorism measures and sanctions on the provision of humanitarian assistance. In the context of increasingly broader definitions of terrorism and the growth in the imposition of sanctions, the paper argued for exemptions to counterterror legislation for humanitarian activities. Findings also explored the difficulties in compliance, especially in terms of recent trends towards donors and organisations operating under restrictions that go beyond what is legally required. The paper's launch was attended by representatives of the European Commission, UN agencies (including UNDP, WFP) governments (including the US, UK, Lebanon, Bahrain), humanitarian actors, banks, the media, and academics.

Labour

Chatham House is opposed to all forms of discrimination and values equality in the workplace. In full support of UNGC Principle 6, we are committed to equal opportunities in employment regardless of marital status, gender, sexual orientation, disability, colour, race, religion or belief, nationality, ethnicity, or age.

Starting in spring 2020, we developed a strategy along with internal processes and structures to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into our work. In March 2022 Chatham House's Council and our EDI Working Group (EDIWG) approved a three-year plan to address EDI considerations at the institute.

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The Plan has three core objectives: embed EDI into governance and management structure; incorporate EDI into HR approach; and develop EDI in research, convening and communication and publishing. The EDI WG has also addressed specific instances of bias and potential discrimination to create a more diverse workspace, for example in formalising a 'Manels Policy' that ensures all-male speaker events are phased out, or working on accessibility-focused adaptations to the 300-year-old premises.

A unionized workplace itself, Chatham House also uses its position as a leading private sector membership body to support widespread adoption of ethical business practices, particularly with regards to UNGC Principles 3, 4 and 5. We have over 300 corporate members, giving us a privileged position to engage with some of the world's largest multinationals. In March, for example, we held a one-day Responsible Business Conference themed on mainstreaming ESG, focused on how this feeds into meaningful business decision-making and assessing what it takes for responsible and resilient businesses to succeed in the long-term. The event brought together senior executives from finance, tech and retail and high-level officials from UNDP, UNEP and the European Commission. A well-received session examined how social impact could be defined and measured as part of the much-discussed 'S' of ESG.

Environment

Chatham House's environment and climate research spans several pressing areas of focus, including energy transitions, food systems and the circular economy. Our work informs governments and private sector actors alike, in particular at the intersection of climate and security policy where we are currently analysing the effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on the global food system.

A key opportunity to promote greater environmental responsibility was the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP26, held in Glasgow in November 2021. COP offered a major opportunity to leverage and promote the expertise of Chatham House around this pivotal climate change conference. In the run-up to the conference, we disseminated key reports aimed at the media, public and businesses. Of these, the Climate Change Risk Assessment was our most-read website piece that year, and has continued to be both widely cited in the media and quoted by campaigners and policymakers. While this report laid out the need for coordinated climate policy aiming to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C, another research paper helped refine business practices in the biomass sector. In the period before COP, we released findings that the scale of emissions from burning wood pellets for energy was not properly taken into account. This contribution to the debate changed reporting practices for some biomass firms.

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Another project that supports UNGC Principles 8 and 9 is the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA), also launched at COP26. We supported BOGA from September 2020 by advising the co-chairs, Denmark and Costa Rica, including work advising on the establishment of the Alliance, including BOGA's governance structure and policy work, supporting the co-chairs' diplomatic outreach and membership process, and convening the CSO stakeholder group. The Alliance supports coalitions of public, private and third sector partners to embed responsible practices as nations prepare for the transition away from fossil fuel industries.

Anticorruption

Chatham House has several policies and internal controls to address the risk of corruption in all its forms. These include a Conflict of Interest Policy, Anti-Bribery and Acceptance of Gifts Policy, Procurement Policy, Sanctions Policy, Research Integrity Policy and Whistleblowing Policy. These documents are kept on the internal HR system and staff are made aware of all organisational policies during their induction process.

Our funders include several international development partner agencies, meaning that we are compliant with an enhanced level of due diligence, anti-fraud and safeguarding requirements. Our Charity Commission registration also demands reliable scrutiny of all transactions and financial arrangements, along with annual reporting against these criteria.

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