



Internet Governance Forum 2019

Draft Proposal for an Open Forum on the Business and Human Rights in Technology Project: Applying the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to digital technologies

In a context of increased demands from companies for authoritative guidance on the application of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in the tech sector, UN Human Rights has launched last June at RightsCon in Tunis a project on tech and human rights. The project seeks to address the growing urgency from companies, civil society and policy makers to find principled and pragmatic ways to address the socio-political harms that might, or do, occur during the application of digital technologies, including AI, by the private and public sectors. These issues are increasingly seen through the lens of human rights risks, not just ethical dilemmas. The lens has widened to bring into view issues of governance, public policy, and corporate responsibility and accountability. This makes the UNGPs a useful framework to prevent, address and remedy the vast array of actual or potential harm related to digital technologies.

Through convening an inclusive process of consultations and research involving key actors (public and private), the project will ultimately provide a roadmap to the application of the *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (UNGPs) to the development and use of digital technologies, comprising policy guidance and public policy recommendation to realize a rights-based approach to the application and governance of digital technologies.

Roughly six months after the launch of the project, the Open Forum session will provide an update on the process and an opportunity to reflect, discuss and invite feedback from the participants on some of its very early and preliminary assessments. In particular, the session will gather a number of selected expert speakers involved in the project to discuss:

- some of the most salient human rights issues that have been identified so far and which are related to the development and application of some AI selected digital technologies
- how the UNGPs offers a framework for identifying, mitigating, and remedying the human rights risks posed by these technologies.