



**British Institute of  
International and  
Comparative Law**

## Media Release

**For immediate release: 17 November 2015**

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### **Companies must ensure that all their employees know enough about human rights to recognise a risk**

The British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL) is stressing the importance of companies needing to protect themselves by ensuring that all their employees have basic training on what internationally recognised human rights are – not just those which they consider to be at most obvious relevance to their business or sector.

Companies are seeing a significant rise in legislation regulating corporate human rights impacts. Examples include the UK Modern Slavery Act and the EU non-financial reporting directive. Many companies have already adopted human rights policies, and others are currently in the process of doing so. Since the adoption of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in 2011, investors, regulators, financiers, shareholders and consumers have been paying increasing attention to whether companies are doing adequate human rights due diligence.

To ensure the effectiveness of the human rights policy, human rights risks have to be recognised on the operational level, where the interaction with the rights-holders take place: on the factory floor, the construction site, the overseas operations, in the laboratory, and when supplies are procured.

Institute Director, Professor Robert McCorquodale, said: “Many companies have extensive training on topics such as health and safety, labour rights or corruption, but very few provide employees with a basic overview of what human rights are, and what is meant by a human rights risk. This leaves a gap for other types of human rights risks to go unnoticed and create risks.”

To address this need BIICL is offering a dynamic, new human rights Short Course, ‘*Human Rights for Business People*’ to companies seeking to provide their employees with fundamental training on the list of human rights, how they work, and how they apply to a business context.

The course takes place on Wednesday 2 December 2015 at BIICL’s offices in London. Discounts are available for four or more participants from one company. Full course details are available at [www.biicl.org/humanrightscourse](http://www.biicl.org/humanrightscourse)

BIICL also provides in-house bespoke training to companies unable to send participants on this course, or where a more tailored training focus is required. For more information on bespoke training, please contact [l.smit@biicl.org](mailto:l.smit@biicl.org)

**ENDS**

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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## NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL) is one of the leading independent research centres for international and comparative law in the world. It provides informed, independent and practical legal ideas for a global community. Its high quality and respected work involves analysis and debate about contemporary issues on every continent, from its base in the heart of London's energetic and multicultural legal network. (Registered Charity No. 209425. Company Registration 615025). For more information visit [www.biicl.org](http://www.biicl.org)

2. BIICL is working with Norton Rose Fulbright on the Business and Human Rights Due Diligence Project, a study aimed at producing practical recommendations for businesses in relation to their approach to human rights due diligence. We expect to launch our findings in 2016. More information is available at [www.biicl.org/duediligence](http://www.biicl.org/duediligence)

3. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, adopted in 2011, rest on three pillars: the state obligation to protect against human rights abuse by corporate actors; the corporate responsibility to respect human rights; and access to effective remedies by victims.