Human Rights Obligations of Business:
The Case For Reforms And Effective Remedies-Sierra Leone A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

The global outcry against the adverse consequences of globalization and its progeny direct foreign investment (DFI) has reached 'hard-to-ignore' proportions. Correspondingly, calls for enhanced corporate governance mechanisms and effective access to remedies have increased to unprecedented levels.

Though a global trend, corporate-related human rights violations are more systemic and egregious in Sierra Leone. The surge in corporate-related human rights violations and the increase in conflicts between host communities and mining rights holders since 2007\(^1\) affirm this.

The overarching hypothesis of this research is, left unregulated; corporations will not voluntarily take evocative steps to mitigate the adverse consequences of their operations.\(^2\) This research will interrogate the veracity of such a claim.

This research seeks to investigate Jagers’ assertion that the core business and human challenges are: (i) persistence in corporate impunity, (ii) susceptibility of particularly fragile states to acquiesce to corporate

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\(^2\) Jagers, 2002, p.49.
pressure\textsuperscript{3} and (iii) prevalence of collusion and complicity, under the pretext of so-called trade processing zones.\textsuperscript{4}

The recurring questions for which this research seeks answers are: do corporations have human rights obligations? Are their consequences for breach? Do victims have access to remedies? What are the national and international normative groundings? How effective are they? How accessible are they? Do they have global judicial applicability? If this normative machinery is malfunctioning why is it? How can the constraints in accessing remedies be addressed? Are their international best practices on access to remedy provision worth replicating?

This research will investigate the authenticity of Ruggie’s claim that the duty to protect does not extend extraterritorially.\textsuperscript{5} This research will also investigate the feasibility of accessing investor


\textsuperscript{4}Ibid.

liability litigation, in other global judicial arena\textsuperscript{6} aside from The US.
The national normative grounding for business-linked human rights violations in Sierra Leone will be investigated being that it is the principal case study country.

# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Globalisation: A Brief Overview</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Globalisation and Human Rights: Making a Case for Reforms</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Research Aims and Objectives</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Statement of Problem</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Structure of Paper</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Research Methodology</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Review of Literature</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CHAPTER 2. Human Rights Obligations of Business: A Baseline Understanding</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 The Past</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 The Present</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Establishing The Legal Personality Of Corporations: Do Corporations Have A Legal Personality?</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Modulating the Corporate Legal Identity Debate</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Sources Of Justification For Corporate Responsibility: Bringing The Normative Architecture Into Focus</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Corporate Accountability And Access To Justice: A Contemporary And Realistic Approach</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Avenues For Enforcement And Implementation</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 The Future</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. CHAPTER 3. The United Nations Guiding Principles And Framework: A Contextual Analysis And Practical Application—Case Studies From Sierra Leone And Beyond

3.1 Introduction ................................................................. 64
3.2 The Beginning Of The End Of Corporate Impunity ....................................................... 66
3.3 Due Diligence And Complicity: From Theory To Practice .................................................. 69

3.3.1 Due Diligence: An Illustrative Approach ......69
3.3.2 Complicity: An Illustrative Approach ...... 73
3.5 The Ruggie Framework: A Contextual Analysis using Case Studies in Sierra Leone and Beyond: Using Case Studies From Sierra Leone And Beyond ..............................................................77

3.6 The Right To Remedy Under International Law ........................................................................ 84

4. CHAPTER 4. National Human Rights Institutions As Corporate Governance Mechanisms

4.1 National Human Rights Institutions In The Area Of Business And Human Rights: Origin And Normative Grounding ................................................................. 88
4.2 The Role Of National Human Rights Institutions In Operationalizing The Guiding Principles: Case Studies From Sierra Leone and Elsewhere .................................................................92
4.3 The Role of National Human Rights Institutions In Access To Remedy Provision:
Using The Human Rights Commission Of Sierra Leone As A Prototype

4.4 Challenges Faced By NHRIs In Facilitating Access to Remedy

4.5 Challenges Victims Encounter In Their Quest For Remedies

5. CHAPTER

5.1 Summary

5.2 Conclusions

5.3 Recommendations

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Human rights obligations of business: the case for reforms and effective remedies: Sierra Leone a case study

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