



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI  
DI MILANO



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**International Conference**  
**BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS:**  
**INTERNATIONAL LAW CHALLENGES, EUROPEAN RESPONSES**

**University of Milan**

**29-30 May 2017**

Transnational business activities are important drivers of growth for developing and the least-developed countries. However, business activities can also negatively impact the enjoyment of human rights. In some cases multinational corporations have even been accused of grave human rights abuses on the territory of the States where their subsidiaries are incorporated.

The relationship that exists between the development of business activities and the protection of human rights is addressed by international law. Some international legal instruments, especially the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (OECD Guidelines) and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) have blazed the trail in this field.

As the parent companies of many multinational enterprises are incorporated on the territory of European countries, the latter's domestic legislation and the EU legal framework are worthy of examination. In fact they play a crucial role in establishing how the business activities of European multinational corporations should be conducted and which remedies can be activated when corporate human rights violations occur, thus providing specific responses to the challenges posed at international level.

This Conference focuses on several different legal instruments and legal areas, including: the international legal framework on Business and Human Rights (B&HR); domestic legislation and related practice and case law implementing it in Europe; the European Union (EU) legal

framework on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), corporate behavior, and private international law; the EU trade and investment policy and the international agreements thereby negotiated or concluded.

On the basis of the examination of these legal instruments, the Conference aims at identifying the solutions offered in Europe to the B&HR international law issues and at providing an overall assessment of their effectiveness.

### **Call for papers:**

We encourage scholars (especially scholars expert in International Law, EU Law, and B&HR) to submit papers on the following and related topics (the list is not exhaustive):

- The implementation in Europe of the international legal instruments and principles on B&HR;
- The European contribution to the development of international principles on B&HR;
- The implementation in Europe of the Sustainable Development Goals and the relationship existing with B&HR;
- The EU and domestic frameworks on CSR and their relationship with the international legal framework on B&HR;
- National Action Plans (NAPs) implementing the UNGPs in Europe;
- The UNGPs' State duty to protect human rights, as interpreted and applied by the EU, the Council of Europe, and/or by European countries;
- Legislation addressing corporate behavior and the provision for a human rights due diligence process in Europe;
- Access to remedies within Europe;
- The implementation of the OECD Guidelines and the relevant practice developed by the National Contact Points established in Europe;
- The EU private international legal framework on B&HR, its application and the related case law;
- The implications for B&HR of the EU trade and investment policy (including the negotiation/conclusion of: Free Trade Agreements, Economic Partnership Agreements and/or Investment Agreements/Chapters);
- Public/private partnerships as a means to promote respect for human rights in Europe.

We invite scholars to adopt the perspective of this Conference, namely “International Law Challenges, European Responses”. We thus welcome papers approaching B&HR as disciplined by international, EU and domestic law and focusing on the specific challenges and achievements of the different legal systems.

**Submission of proposals:**

Please send your proposals for papers (abstracts) not exceeding 600 words to: [EUlawbusinesshumanrights@unimi.it](mailto:EUlawbusinesshumanrights@unimi.it).

Please indicate your name, surname, affiliation, and position in your submission.

**Publication of papers:**

Papers presented at the Conference will be considered for publication as part of an edited volume produced by a leading publisher. Please indicate, when submitting your abstract, if you would be interested in contributing.

**Deadlines:**

- Submission of abstracts: 31 January 2017
- Selection of papers: 15 February 2017
- Delivery of full papers: 15 May 2017

**Contact:**

For more information, please contact: [angelica.bonfanti@unimi.it](mailto:angelica.bonfanti@unimi.it)