

## **This week Security and Human Rights claimed their space in the national agenda**

**Bogota, April 20<sup>th</sup> 2016** - Two important spaces to reflect upon promoting respect for Human Rights (HR) took place this week in Bogota.

The first was the event “Mining and Energy Sector: Security and Human Rights in Post-conflict” convened by the Mining and Energy Committee Corporation, CME; and the second is the “International Plenary Meeting on Voluntary Principles”, which for the first time is carried out in Colombia, scheduled Wednesday and Thursday this week.

### **Mining and Energy Sector: Security and Human Rights in Post-conflict**

During the event, the Mining and Energy Committee Corporation, CME – constituted by oil, mining and electric energy companies, National Government, Civil Society Organizations, business associations and diplomatic missions in the country– presented an analysis about opportunities, impacts and risks on security and Human Rights, which the sector anticipates for Colombia in regards to the end of the armed conflict with the FARC.

During the event, Luz Stella Paez, Executive Director of the CME, explained guidelines proposed to the country by the mining and energy sector, in order to understand possible post-conflict scenarios and facilitate changes in the relationship between the business sector, communities and Public Force, based on new security challenges.

The appointed Deputy Minister of Interior, Guillermo Rivera, and the Voluntary Principles Plenary Secretary, Gare Smith, inaugurated the event. Afterwards, two panels were developed to discuss risks and opportunities for the mining and energy sector in a post-conflict scenario.

Maria Victoria Riaño, president of Equion Energy Limited, called the National Government and private enterprise to understand and address the needs of civil society; it is in this way that the mining and energy sector should advance. "It is essential to establish agreements, in which attention to the needs of society becomes, understanding other with compassion."

Meanwhile, Yadaira Orsini, head of Economy Development and Peace, International Alert, said that in Colombia it is necessary that the sector understands security as a fundamental right. "The country undoubtedly needs to bring more to light the needs and problems of communities and it is the duty of the company, and the state, to promote peace in the region through economic development, employment opportunities and better living conditions".

With this meeting, among other activities, the CME Corporation aims to contribute to the National Government's objective of advancing in the construction of territorial

peace, and strengthening relationships between companies, State and communities, within a framework of respect for Human Rights and generation of best practices to achieve safer environments.

### **International Plenary on Voluntary Principles**

For the first time, eight governments (United States, Canada, Australia, Ghana, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom), thirty companies with worldwide operations, and ten non-governmental organizations –part of the Voluntary Principles Initiative–, will meet in a Latin American country to discuss progress in VP’s implementation around the world.

This is a space to exchange experiences and proposals to face complex security and Human Rights situations, from companies, communities and governments’ points of view. In this year’s Plenary, Canada will assume the Secretariat of the Initiative for the 2016 -1017 period.

The Colombian Government has sought to reinforce the plenary meeting with active participation from the three pillars identified by Voluntary Principles: government, civil society organizations and companies. Responding to this principle, during the meeting, the Post-conflict Director from the Office of the Minister Advisor for Post-conflict, Human Rights and Security, Alexandra Guaqueta; the National Army Commander, General Alberto José Mejía, and the Deputy Defense Minister, Anibal Fernández de Soto, will carry out presentations on VP’s implementation in the country. They will also present specific issues such as memorandums of understanding, a fundamental element to prevent Human Rights violations in Colombia.

Furthermore, Deputy Minister of Mines, María Isabel Ulloa, and CME’s Executive Director, Luz Stella Paez, will present Colombia’s journey in the development of successful multi-actor experiences for the promotion of best practices in security and Human Rights, including those from the CME.

This way, Colombia advances in the consolidation of a path to guarantee security related Human Rights at the business level.

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