



Global Rule of Law Business Principles

Preamble

We, the signatories to these Principles, believe the rule of law is essential for the greater social good and for protecting and advancing the goals of global business.

The rule of law requires that all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. The rule of law requires adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness, and procedural and legal transparency.

Where the rule of law thrives, there is greater economic growth and prosperity and improved social good. Conversely, the lack of the rule of law stifles commercial creativity and is to the great detriment of worldwide business concerns.

The Global Rule of Law Business Principles, therefore, is a set of commonly held guidelines to which any business—regardless of industry, locale, or local laws and customs—could agree and adhere. Through our support and advocacy of the Global Rule of Law Business Principles, we, the signatories to these Principles, will endeavor to encourage governments and other organizations with which they do business to support the rule of law as a means of advancing economic growth and the greater social good.

1) We will support fair process of legal redress, access to justice, and access to the law.

An independently administered and implemented process of law protects individuals against arbitrary or capricious actions by governments, businesses, or individuals by affording them the right of legal redress. Such redress should be before independent and ethical adjudicators who apply laws impartially and are themselves subject to law. The law should be transparent and available to all and access to justice should not be improperly delayed or denied.

2) We will support the sanctity of contracts and property rights, both for real property and intellectual property.

Adherence to contracts and property rights is core to the rule of law, both for individual citizens and businesses. Unless such agreements are recognized and upheld by the legal system, there is no foundation for a proper economy, nor can individuals protect their family's income or possessions from an acquisitive state, special interest, or business.

3) We will implement fair and ethical business practices subject to local laws and customs.

Fair and ethical business practices are an integral foundation to the advancement of the rule of law. We will promote business practices, in accordance to local laws and customs, which support honest and ethical dealings among employees, customers, business associates, suppliers, and other stakeholders. We will educate our stakeholders and hold them accountable to these standards. We commit ourselves to acting in a manner that adheres to these principles and will advocate for our potential vendors, customers, and business associates to do the same.

4) We will not engage in bribery or support corruption.

Bribery and corruption are anathema to the rule of law. Corrupt practices undermine attempts to achieve higher levels of economic and social welfare and impede efforts to reduce poverty. We therefore support the passing of, and impartial enforcement of, all anti-bribery laws. We also will

refrain from dealing with corrupt individuals, organizations, and governments. By refusing to engage in bribery or support corruption, we bolster respect for legal institutions and help to mitigate the adverse impact of these illegal practices.

5) We will encourage the protection of human rights.

The protection of human rights includes our opposition to forced or child labor, human trafficking, discrimination, corruption, and other generally accepted forms. We will endeavor to work with governments and others to encourage the fair treatment of all individuals, in accordance with local laws and customs. We will adhere to these standards in our own businesses, no matter where a facility is located. Wherever possible, we will refrain from doing business in environments where such abuses are actively or tacitly condoned or permitted.

6) We will advocate on behalf of the Global Rule of Law Business Principles and track and report on our organization's adherence to those Principles.

As advocates for the rule of law we aim to raise the collective awareness of all stakeholders—meaning both the communities and governments where we do business, and the vendors and organizations with which we do business. Working locally, we will cooperate with other signatories of these Principles to encourage greater adherence to the rule of law in specific countries and regions.

As a signatory to the Global Rule of Law Business Principles, we commit to creating a documented compliance and recordkeeping program of our own actions in support of the rule of law. We commit to reporting annually to the organizers of these Principles on our specific initiatives in support of the rule of law. We will also promote and encourage examples of demonstrated adherence to the Principles by corporate colleagues, governments, independent organizations, and others.