

SELECTED QUOTES ON THE 'SPHERE OF INFLUENCE' CONCEPT

// The concept has not been defined authoritatively; however the 'sphere of influence' of a business entity tends to include the individuals to whom it has a certain political, contractual, economic or geographic proximity. Every business entity, whatever its size, will have a sphere of influence; the larger it is, the larger the sphere of influence is likely to be. //

"REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS & RELATED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES"
E/CN.4/2005/91, COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, 61ST SESSION, 15 FEBRUARY 2005

// Lacking a principled basis for differentiating responsibilities, the concept of 'spheres of influence' is left to carry the burden. But in legal terms this is a burden it cannot sustain on its own. The concept has productive practical applicability, as we saw in the discussion of company human rights policies and as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General will elaborate more fully in his final report. But it has no legal pedigree; it derives from geopolitics. //

"PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: INTERIM REPORT OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS ENTERPRISES"
E/CN.4/2006/97, COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, 62ND SESSION, 22 FEBRUARY 2006

SELECTED QUOTES ON THE 'SPHERE OF INFLUENCE' CONCEPT

// Every company, both large and small, has a sphere of influence, though obviously the larger or more strategically significant the company, the larger the company's sphere of influence is likely to be. //

"THE GLOBAL COMPACT AND HUMAN RIGHTS: UNDERSTANDING SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AND COMPLICITY"
OHCHR BRIEFING PAPER, IN EMBEDDING HUMAN RIGHTS IN BUSINESS PRACTICE
UN GLOBAL COMPACT OFFICE, NOVEMBER 2004

// The idea of 'sphere of influence', does not depend for its force on legal principles alone...At least three moral arguments underpin its importance. First, the people closest to a company, such as its employees, are those with whom it is most likely to have a special relationship. It follows ethically that, whatever its general obligations to society, a company should take care not to harm its employees and should seek to improve their lives. Secondly, within its sphere of influence a company is most likely to know, or ought to know, the human rights consequences of its actions and omissions. If a company can predict or reasonably foresee that its actions or failures will result in human rights violations, then it is at least morally obliged to try to stop or prevent them from occurring. Thirdly, it is in relation to the people or institutions with whom it is most proximate that it will have power, authority, influence, leverage or opportunity to protect victims or intervene with abusers //

"BEYOND VOLUNTARISM: HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE DEVELOPING INTERNATIONAL LEGAL OBLIGATIONS OF COMPANIES"
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, JANUARY 2002