

 OECD Watch

March 2024

Joint Statement

On 8 June 2023, the OECD released the revised Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct (OECD Guidelines). In addition to updating standards on responsible business conduct (RBC) for enterprises, the revised Guidelines strengthen expectations for adhering governments' establishment and operation of National Contact Points (NCPs).

The OECD Ministerial Council Meeting on 8 June 2023 underlined the importance of continuing to strengthen the performance of NCPs and ensure the human and financial resources necessary to fulfill their responsibilities. The critical role of the OECD Guidelines and NCPs has also been highlighted by the G7 and G20:

- The G7 Leaders' Declaration from 2015: "We commit to strengthening mechanisms for providing access to remedies including the National Contact Points for the OECD Guidelines. In order to do so, the G7 will encourage the OECD to promote peer reviews and peer learning on the functioning and performance of NCPs. We will ensure that our own NCPs are effective and lead by example."¹
- The G20 Leaders' Declaration from 2017: "We support access to remedy and, where applicable, non-judicial grievance mechanisms, such as the NCPs for the OECD Guidelines."²

Business at OECD (BIAC), TUAC, and OECD Watch, representing respectively the views of business, workers, and non-governmental organisations, welcome the OECD's, G7's, and G20's focus on strengthening NCPs. We support Adherent efforts to further strengthen the performance of NCPs, in particular those that have to catch up, including through the exchange of best practices and implementation of recommendations made in the updated Procedures. We encourage companies and submitters involved in complaints to participate in the NCP process in good faith and with a view to finding a constructive solution in a timely manner.³

We urge governments and the OECD to take meaningful steps to ensure NCPs are effective. In particular, we call on Adherents to:

- Ensure their NCPs have the human and financial resources, senior leadership, and access to expertise necessary to fulfill their mandate in a transparent way that fully meets the effectiveness criteria.
- Ensure their NCPs engage in peer reviews and peer learning with a view to improving their fulfilment of the effectiveness criteria.

¹ [01_2015-06-08-leaders-statement_final_clean.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

² [2017-07-08 Communiqué EN \(europa.eu\)](#)

³ BIAC – TUAC – OECD Watch Joint Statement Supporting the Capacity of the NCP In the Current Covid-19 Crisis July 2020.

 **OECD Watch**

- Ensure their NCPs develop and maintain meaningful relations with representatives of relevant government agencies/ministries, business and worker organisations, and non-governmental organisations.
- Ensure that decisions are communicated objectively.

We call upon the OECD Investment Committee and the OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct to:

- Support Adherent efforts to improve their NCP effectiveness.
- Meaningfully exercise their ability to recommend improvements to NCPs that, for an extended period of time and without legitimate reason, manifestly have not been operating in a way consistent with the Guidelines.

We call upon the OECD Ministerial Council to:

- Recognise the role of the OECD Guidelines in supporting sustainable development and the necessity of well-functioning NCPs in securing observance of the Guidelines.
- Call on Adherents to ensure their NCPs are adequately resourced to carry out their mandate in a way that fully meets the effectiveness criteria.
- Ensure secure funding for an impactful NCP peer review programme.

We encourage that this joint statement be shared with the OECD Secretary-General and submitted to Adherent government officials with responsibility for their NCP budget and staffing decisions.