OECD invites public comment on draft risk management tool for investors in weak governance zones

The OECD is inviting public comment on a draft risk management tool for investors in weak governance zones, designed to help companies manage their operations with integrity.

A weak governance zone is a place where government is not working – public officials are unable or unwilling to assume their roles in protecting rights, enforcing the law and providing basic social services. About 14 per cent of the world’s people live in such areas, notably in sub-Saharan Africa. For international business, they represent some of the most difficult investment environments in the world. Challenges include endemic crime and violence, extortion, solicitation and human rights abuses.

Work on this issue follows requests from business and calls from heads of state and government at the 2005 G8 Gleneagles Summit for "developing OECD guidance for companies working in zones of weak governance."

The tool draws on OECD integrity instruments, including the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials, and on extensive consultations with business, trade unions and non-governmental organisations from around the world. It covers such areas as: complying with law and observing international standards; knowing clients and business partners; political activities; and speaking out about wrongdoing.

The deadline for comments is Wednesday 23 November 2005.

For further information, journalists are invited to contact the OECD’s Media Relations Division (tel. + 33 1 45 24 97 00 or mailto:news.contact@oecd.org).