



**MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE ORGANISATION FOR
ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)
AND
THE GLOBAL REPORTING
INITIATIVE (GRI)**



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

**THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
(OECD)**

AND

**THE GLOBAL REPORTING INITIATIVE
(GRI)**

The OECD and GRI,

Considering that the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (hereafter referred to as “the OECD MNE Guidelines”),¹ which are an integral part of the OECD Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises (hereafter referred to as “the OECD Declaration”), constitute recommendations addressed by governments to multinational enterprises setting out voluntary standards and principles for responsible business conduct,

Considering that the OECD Decision on the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of 27 June 2000 endowed the OECD MNE Guidelines with a unique implementation mechanism in the form of National Contact Points in each adhering country which are responsible, *inter alia*, for the promotion of the Guidelines and for the facilitation of access to consensual and non-adversarial means, such as conciliation or mediation, to assist in the resolution of issues that arise relating to the implementation of the OECD Guidelines in specific instances;

Considering that GRI is a global multi-stakeholder network of experts from business, civil society, mediating institutions and labour organisations, which has pioneered the development and implementation of the leading international framework for sustainability reporting by private and public organisations on economic, social and environmental impacts (hereafter “the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework”);²

Considering that the GRI is supported by and receives input from a large number of governments, including OECD Members;

¹ The text of the OECD MNE Guidelines can be found at www.oecd.org/daf/investment/guidelines.

² Information on the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework and the latest version of the GRI Guidelines (the G3 Guidelines) can be found at: www.globalreporting.org/ReportingFramework.

Considering that the OECD MNE Guidelines and GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework are based on and promote the same internationally agreed standards and principles for responsible business conduct, notably in the fields of social and human rights as well as in economic and environment matters, and that they both support multi-stakeholder engagement;

Considering that the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework refers to the OECD MNE Guidelines as a benchmark for responsible business conduct reporting and that the Commentary to the OECD MNE Guidelines refers to the GRI as an example of an initiative for reporting standards that enhance the ability of enterprises to communicate on the influence of their activities on sustainable development outcomes;

Considering that the OECD MNE Guidelines and the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework have received prominent international recognition including by the G8 and the UN, that they are among the most widely referenced global corporate responsibility instruments and that leading corporations extensively use the OECD MNE Guidelines and the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework in developing their own codes of conduct;

Recalling that the 2003 exchange of letters between the GRI and the OECD Secretary-General acknowledged the existence of significant synergies and complementarities between the two instruments and the desirability of exploiting them further³; and that a public document was jointly developed in 2004⁴ by the GRI and OECD highlighting these complementarities and providing guidance on how to make use of their synergies;

Noting that the agreed terms of reference for the update of the OECD MNE Guidelines in 2010-2011 [DAF/INV(2010)5/FINAL] foresee the involvement of the GRI, notably in regard to the disclosure provisions of the OECD MNE Guidelines, that the GRI has already provided views on the update of the OECD MNE Guidelines and noting that the GRI will be involved in the implementation and dissemination of the updated OECD MNE Guidelines;

Considering that there are related areas in which closer cooperation between the OECD and GRI would be beneficial, including work on responsible supply chain management;

Agree that it is in the mutual interest of the OECD and GRI (hereafter individually referred to as “a Party” and collectively “the Parties”) to establish the following Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter referred to as “the MOU”):

³ Reproduced in 2003 Annual Report on the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, pp 81-84.

⁴ Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/26/35150230.pdf>.

Article I

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the MOU is to establish a programme of cooperation for an initial period of three years to promote greater understanding, visibility and use of the OECD MNE Guidelines and the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework, to exploit the synergies and complementarities between the two instruments and to develop cooperation between the Parties in other areas of mutual interest.

Any activities conducted under this MOU are subject to their inclusion in the Parties' respective programme of work and budget and shall be carried out in accordance with their respective rules and practices.

Article II

Content of the Cooperation Programme

Subject to resource availability, each Party will take appropriate opportunities to support and profile the work of the other Party and encourage its use. The main initiatives or activities envisaged under the cooperation programme include:

On the part of the GRI:

- strengthening efforts to encourage MNEs to refer to the OECD MNE Guidelines in responsible business conduct and sustainability reporting;
- strengthening efforts to encourage MNEs to report their use of the OECD MNE Guidelines using the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework;
- providing of information, generic support and advice to National Contact Points (NCPs) on the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework and the role that the Framework can play in promoting and facilitating the effective use of the Guidelines;
- providing of input to the update of the OECD MNE Guidelines;
- profiling of the OECD MNE Guidelines on the GRI website as well as in GRI events, training tools and publications;
- inviting the OECD to be represented in the GRI Governmental Advisory Group, composed of high-level representatives from OECD and non-OECD countries and international governmental organisations;

- providing input on other OECD initiatives of mutual interest including the OECD due diligence guidance for responsible supply chains of minerals from conflict-affected and high-risk areas; and

- inviting the OECD to participate in other GRI activities or events of mutual interest including the meetings of the GRI Supply Chain Working Group;

On the OECD side:

- encouraging adhering governments to the OECD MNE Guidelines and NCPs to promote where appropriate and in conformity with the Commentary on the OECD MNE Guidelines, the use of the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework in relation to disclosure and reporting on the implementation of the OECD Guidelines;

- inviting the GRI to report to the Working Party of the Investment Committee and/or to NCPs as appropriate on trends in sustainability reporting and on the use of the OECD MNE Guidelines in practice;

- actively engaging the GRI in the consultation process on the update of the OECD MNE Guidelines;

- inviting the GRI to the OECD Annual Corporate Responsibility Roundtables;

- profiling as appropriate the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework on the OECD website as well as in OECD corporate responsibility events and publications;

- referencing the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework, as appropriate, in other OECD initiatives such as the OECD due diligence guidance for responsible supply chains of minerals from conflict-affected and high-risk areas; and

- inviting the GRI to participate in other OECD activities and events of mutual interest including the meetings of the OECD-hosted Working Group on Due Diligence in the Mining and Minerals Sector.

Article III

Status of the MOU

For legal purposes nothing in this MOU shall be construed as creating a joint venture, an agency relationship or a legal partnership between the Parties. No provision of this MOU shall be construed so as to in any way interfere with the respective decision-making processes of the Parties with regard to their own respective work and operation. Each Party will bear its own costs incurred in the implementation of this MOU. This MOU does not represent a commitment of funds on the part of either Party.

Article IV

Consultations

Each Party accepts to enter promptly into consultations at the request of the other Party with respect to any matter arising in relation to this MOU.

Article V

Institutional Framework

After the signature of this MOU, each Party will appoint a staff member who will act as focal point for the implementation of the MOU. The focal point will ensure the implementation of the cooperation programme and facilitate the exchange of information between the Parties on matters of common interest.

Article VI

Intellectual Property Rights

The Parties recognise the importance of protecting and respecting intellectual property rights. The OECD will retain all intellectual property rights relating to the OECD MNE Guidelines and other OECD instruments while the GRI will retain all intellectual property rights relating to the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework.

Article VII

Implementation, Renewal, Amendment and Termination.

This MOU is concluded for a period of three years starting at the date of its signature by both Parties. It may be renewed by mutual written agreement between the Parties.

This MOU may be amended in writing by mutual agreement of the Parties. It may be terminated by either Party subject to three months' written notice.

Signed in two original copies in English.

Signed on behalf of OECD

Signed on behalf of GRI

Richard Boucher
Deputy Secretary-General,
Organisation for Economic
Co-operation and Development

Ernst R. Ligteringen
Chief Executive,
Global Reporting Initiative

Date

Date
