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**Summary of proceedings:**  
**Export Development Canada's Advisory Council on**  
**Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

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**Date:** Tuesday, May 7, 2019

**Time:** 8:15-15:00

**Participants**

**From the CSR Advisory Council:**

**Anita Ramasastry**, Dean Emeritus, University of Washington School of Law- *Attending via video conferencing*

**David Wheeler**, Co-Founder of the Academy for Sustainable Innovation

**Rosemary McCarney**, Canadian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva

**Gordon Lambert**, Suncor Sustainability Executive in Residence, Ivey School of Business, Western University

**From Export Development Canada (EDC):**

**Martine Irman**, EDC Board Member

**Mairead Lavery**, President & CEO, and Council Chair

**Catherine Decarie**, Senior Vice-President, Corporate Affairs

**Carl Burlock**, Senior Vice President, Financial & International Growth Capital Group

**Rob Fosco**, Vice-President, Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility

**Stuart Bergman**, Director, Corporate Sustainability Responsibility-Planning & Strategy

**Christopher Pullen**, Director, Environmental & Social Risk Management

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**Absent**

**Marie-Lucie Morin**, Corporate Director and member of the Security and Intelligence Review committee

**Eduardo Bohorquez**, Executive Director of Transparencia Mexicana

**Christa Wessel**, Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel at ClearView Strategic Partners Inc



On May 6 and 7, EDC convened the Spring meeting of its Advisory Council on CSR. The theme of the meeting was *the use of leverage in the context of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the role of financial institutions.*

On May 6, the Council was joined by John Morrison, Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Human Rights and Business. Mr. Morrison helped set the context around the human rights approach to leverage, the wider expectations set out by the UN and governments, and what it means in terms of scope and business relationships. The ensuing discussion focused on the nature of leverage for the financial sector and export credit agencies, the limits to this, and some of the risks that may arise as a result. The group also touched on the potential for new approaches, better tools and new financial products in this area.

The following day, the Council reconvened for a more in-depth discussion of the topic. EDC's objective for the session was to seek the Council's advice in narrowing down how EDC can better leverage its position as an ECA operating in the private sector, to positively impact those most affected by the business it supports.

The meeting began by identifying a number of important issues being faced by some of EDC's stakeholder groups. They include questions around:

1. *the collection and misuse of personal information;*
2. *the length and complexity of value chains and business relationships;*
3. ***the speed of technological and political change;***
4. ***the lack of capacity to manage human rights issues in large and small company supply chains.***

The group also discussed issues concerning:

5. *the role of state-owned enterprises (SOEs);*
6. *the need to advance transparency;*
7. *opportunities to provide local communities a voice.*

The morning concluded with agreement around the following aspirational statement for EDC:



**EDC will accelerate respect for Human Rights internationally through leveraging its resources and stakeholder relationships – and in particular its relationship with Canadian businesses – in order to advance the positive impacts of Canadian businesses abroad.**

The afternoon discussion mainly focused on defining a set of principles that might help guide decision-making around how EDC can better leverage its position as an ECA operating in the private sector.

The principles agreed upon are:

- i. EDC’s approach to leverage outside the transaction context should be aligned with its ability to mobilize knowledge internally and externally, *via multi-stakeholder collaboration* (i.e. “Leverage through bilateral engagement with one or more third parties” or “Leverage through multi-stakeholder collaboration”);
- ii. EDC’s role is to provide *Canadian companies* the competitive advantage needed to go, grow and succeed internationally, and help raise the bar for Brand Canada;
- iii. EDC’s choice of activity should eventually be self-sustaining;
- iv. EDC’s choice of activity must be relevant to Canada, the Canadian economy, and EDC’s business. EDC should also be able to claim legitimacy in taking on the particular initiative;
- v. impact must be measurable.