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## BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

History, law and policy -  
Bridging the accountability gap

Nadia Bernaz



HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW



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Businesses are becoming increasingly larger stakeholders in human rights' respect, protection and fulfilment. With that, the academic study of the subject as well as the application of accountability mechanisms continues to bloom and transform. This timely text comprehensively and critically explores the subject providing context, theory and case-studies, illustrating the complex challenges faced in the accountability sphere as the world strives to overcome abuse of power and human rights. Geared towards key decision makers in business and government, the book is a well-structured account of a broad, deep, multidisciplinary subject. It is a five star navigation through the roles and efforts of relevant court systems and the multifarious sources of accountability aiming for business institutionalization of human rights tenets. Therein, the author brings clarity and organization to a complex field that has many blurred lines. For those interested to gain a deep understanding of the soft and hard law worlds of accountability, the information is delivered in an accessible yet interesting and informative manner such that all readers will be engrossed while reading and leave it down enriched. Thereby, I am certain it will prove invaluable to lawmakers, executives and students alike. Finally and an aside: I read this on Bookshelf and highly recommend the audio feature. While there is still improvement that can be made, it is incredible to have these types of academic books in audio form at all and as I drive 3 hours a day - this improved it's accessibility!

Business corporations can and do violate human rights all over the world, and they are often not held to account. Emblematic cases and situations such as the state of the Niger Delta and the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory are examples of corporate human rights abuses which are not adequately prevented and remedied. Business and human rights as a field seeks to enhance the accountability of business; companies and businesspeople; in the human rights area, or, to phrase it differently, to bridge the accountability gap. Bridging the accountability gap is to be understood as both setting standards and holding corporations and businesspeople to account if violations occur. Adopting a legal perspective, this book presents the ways in which this dual undertaking has been and could be further carried out in the future, and evaluates the extent to which the various initiatives in the field bridge the corporate accountability gap. It looks at the historical background of the field of business and human rights, and examines salient periods, events and cases. The book then goes on to explore the relevance of international human rights law and international criminal law for global business. International soft law and policy initiatives which have blossomed in recent years are evaluated along with private modes of regulation. The book also examines how domestic law, especially the domestic law of multinational companies' home countries, can be used to prevent and redress corporate related human rights violations.

About the Author Nadia Bernaz is a senior lecturer at Middlesex University School of Law in London, adjunct lecturer of the Irish Centre for Human Rights at the National University of Ireland, Galway and visiting professor at the Catholic University of Lille (France).