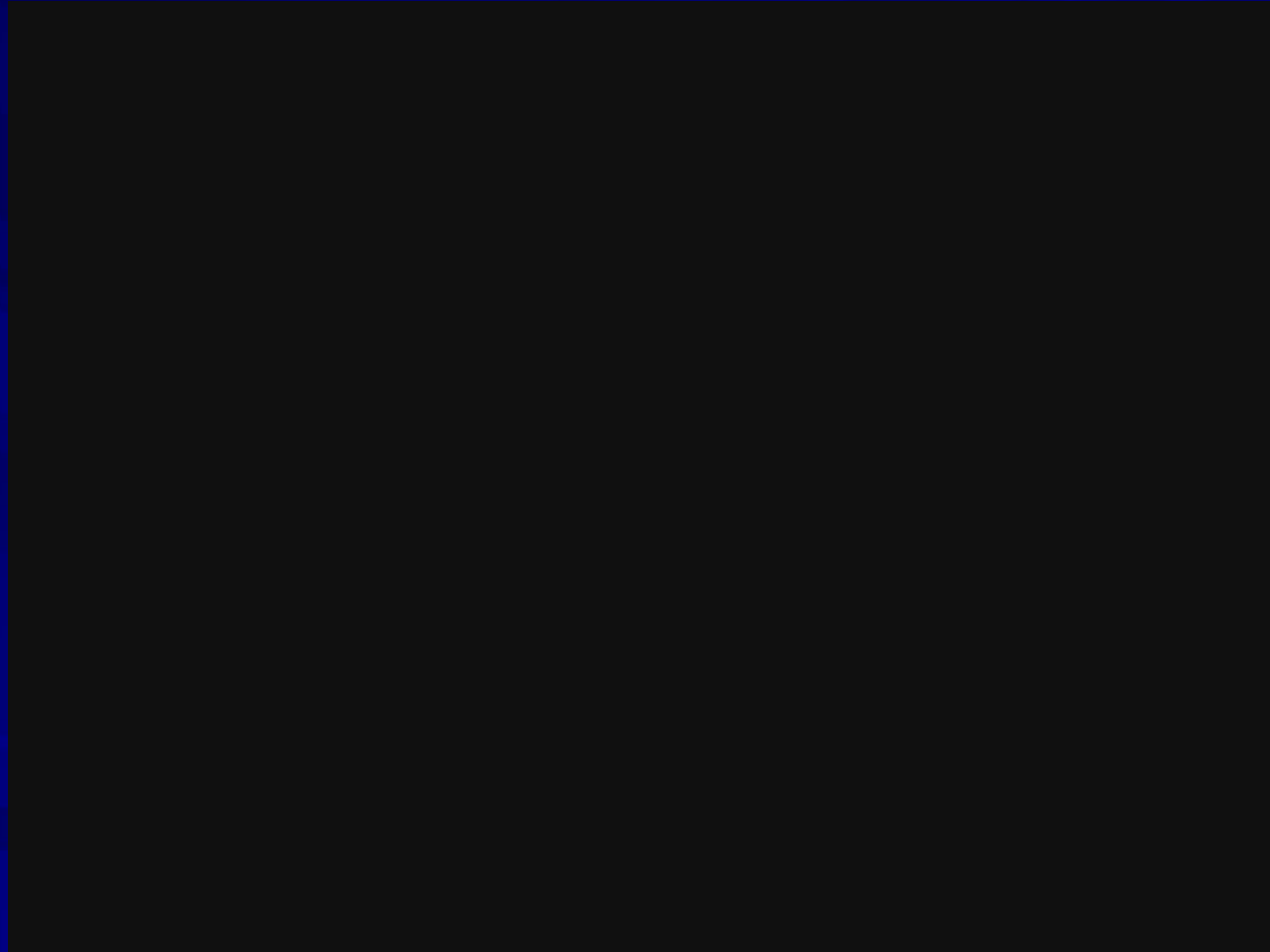


# Human Rights

# Human Rights a pervasive problem...





Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
		Part of problem	Part of solution	Sustainable corporate story

# Human Rights: Definition

Human rights are what reason requires and conscience demands.  
They are us and we are them. Human rights are rights that any person has as a human being. We are all human beings; we are all deserving of human rights. One cannot be true without the other.  
~Kofi Annan, 2004

## What do the Geneva Conventions actually say?

The most important aspect that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights covers is equality. It adamantly states that everyone is equal. All people are equal before the law. All people have equal rights.

## What does that actually mean?

All people are guaranteed life, liberty, and justice regardless of race, religion, sex, creed or anything else.

All people are guaranteed impartial, unbiased treatment.

~Geneva Conventions 1864-2005

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# Protection of Human Rights by Law

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1954)
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969)
- International Labour Rights (ILO) Minimum Age Convention (1973)
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)
- ILO Convention to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999)

Source: [globaleducation.edu](http://globaleducation.edu)



Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
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# Freedom in the World

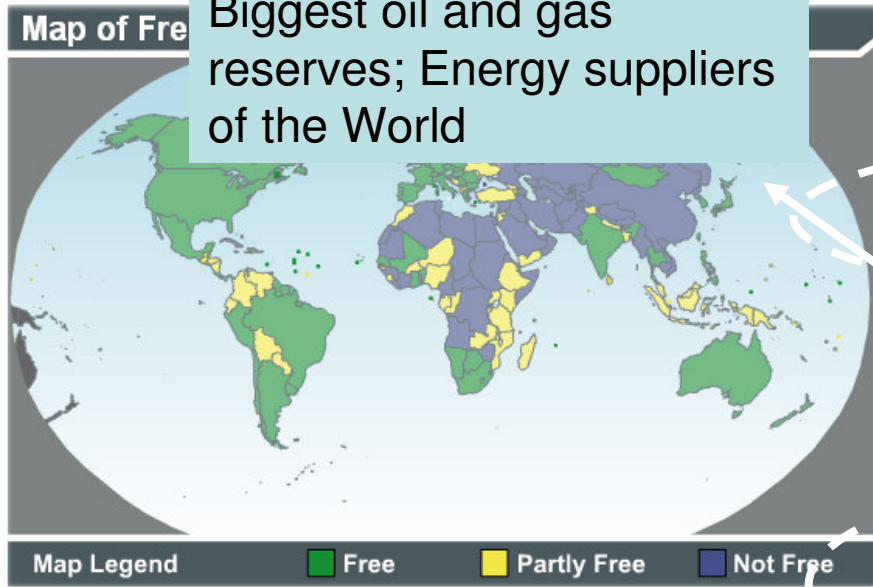
## KEY

PR = Political Rights Biggest trader; Factory

CR = Civil Liberties of the World

1 represents the most free  
and 7 the least free rating;

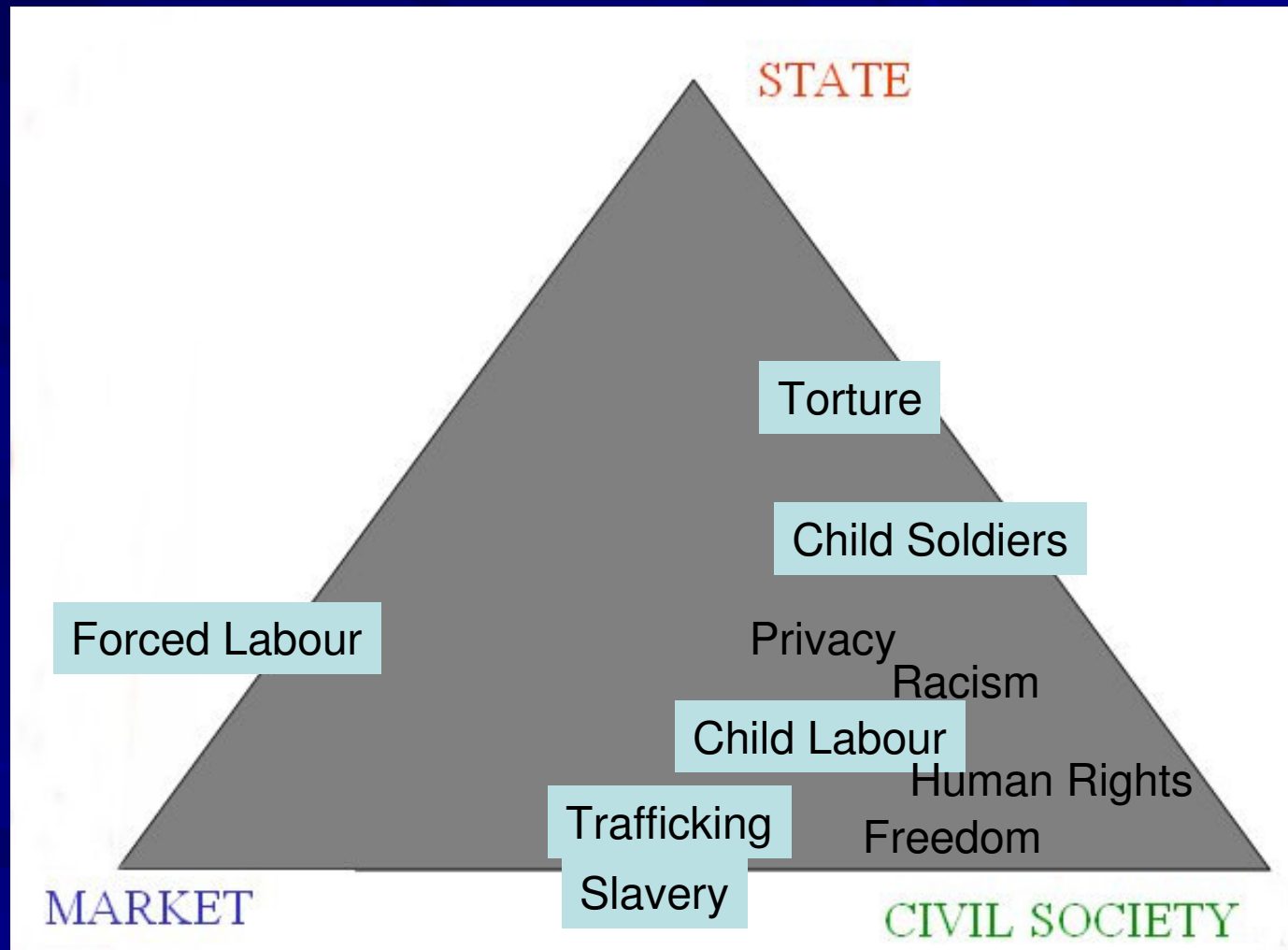
Biggest oil and gas  
reserves; Energy suppliers  
of the World



Country	PR	CR
Afghanistan	5	6
Angola	6	5
Burma	7	7
Cambodia	6	5
Congo	6	6
China	7	6
Iran	6	6
North Korea	7	7
Russia	6	5
Saudi Arabia	7	7

Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
		Part of problem	Part of solution	Sustainable corporate story

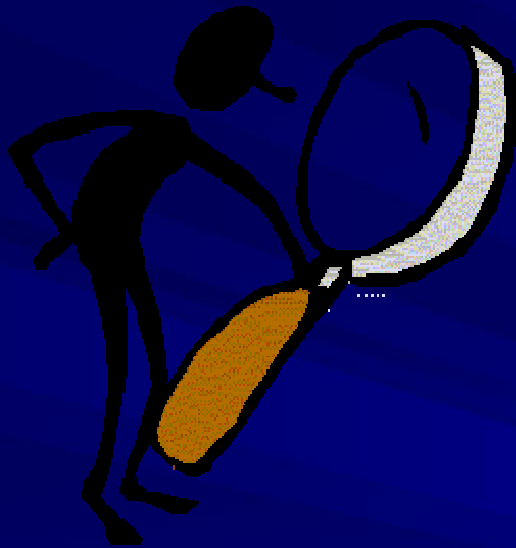
# Human Rights Issues





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# Closer look: Child Labour



Cultural factors?

Minimum Age?



Ghiam-Mafus (L), 16, and his young apprentice work at a blacksmith shop in Kabul January 28, 2002.

Photo © Chien-Min Chung

Driven by poverty?

Exploitation by Western companies?



# Civil Society



Source: [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)



Source: [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

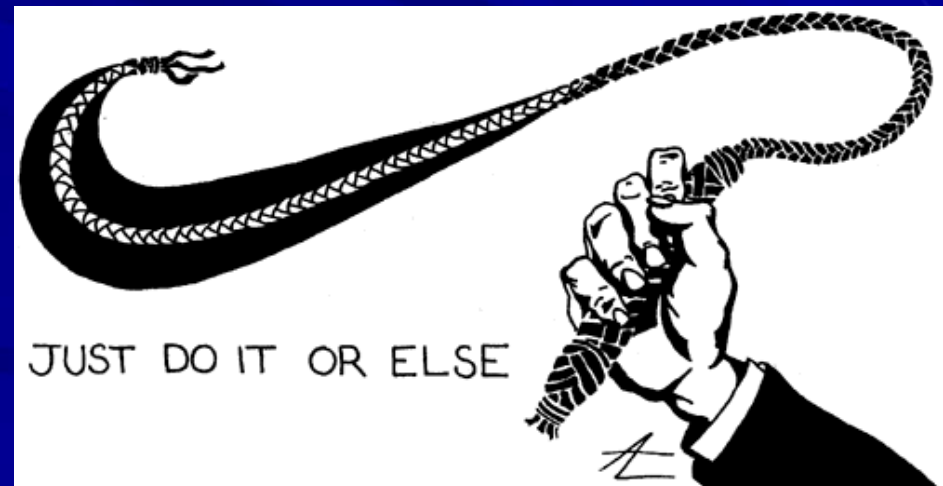
Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
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# Market: Part of the problem?

"Of all human rights failures today, those in economic and social areas affect by far the larger number and are the most widespread across the world's nations and large numbers of people."

-- Human Development Report 2000, United Nations Development Programme, p. 73

- 2.2 million people die of work-related accidents and diseases each year;
- 240 million working children between the age of 5 and 14;
- but >90% is in non-commercial sector (agriculture, households)
- Easy images:



Sources: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2005/36.htm>, visited Jan 07  
K.Stearman, (1999), Slavery Today

Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
		Part of problem	Part of solution	Sustainable corporate story

# Market: Part of the solution?

## non-negotiable “must” norms:

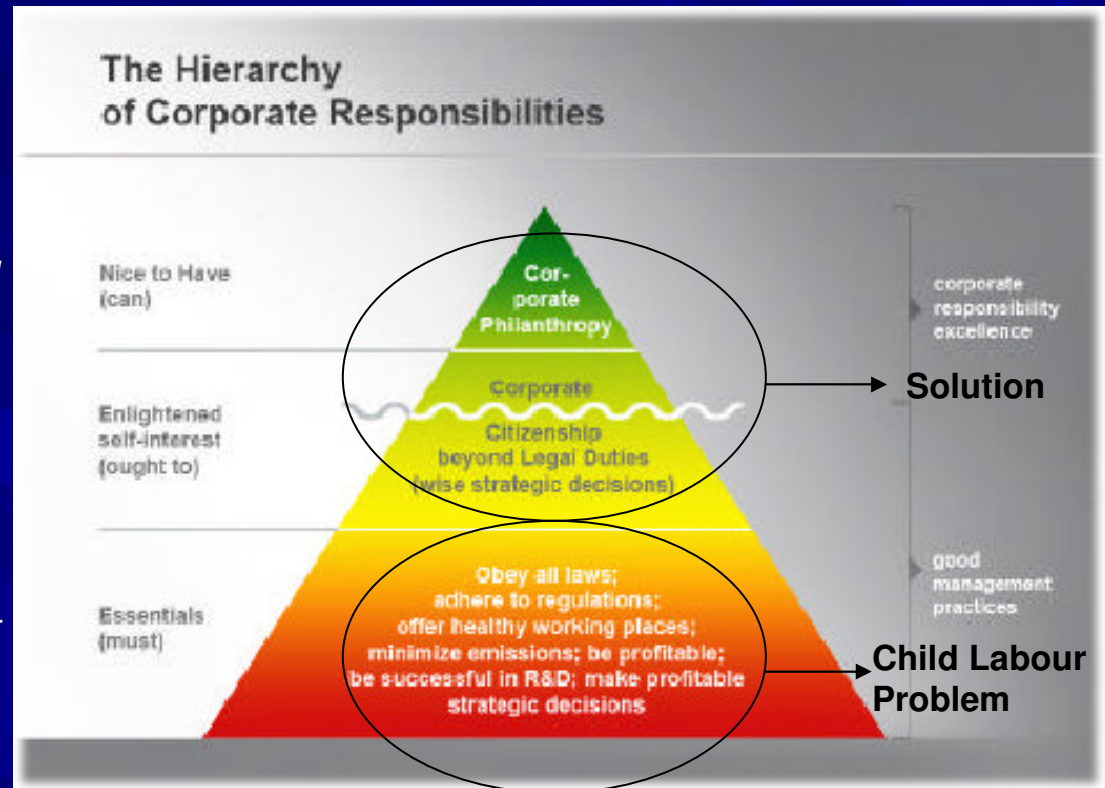
these demand compliance with relevant national laws and regulations in all cases as an *ethical minimum* ;

## “ought to” norms:

these are not stipulated by law but are *morally expected* of a company competing with integrity;

## “can” norms:

these allow the assumption of additional responsibilities not covered by the first two dimensions and let companies that conform to them focus particular attention on their role as excellent corporate citizens (for example, through corporate philanthropy programs, community programs, and other not-forprofit endeavours);



## Sources:

Dahrendorf, R. (1959) *Homo Sociologicus*, p. 24;

De George, R.T. (1993) *Competing with Integrity in International Business*;

Leisinger, K.M., (2006) *On Corporate Responsibility for Human Rights*;

# State

Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
		Part of problem	Part of solution	Sustainable corporate story

## Duties of governments with regard to Human Rights:

- Create a clear and reliable legal framework and hence a level playing field for the respect and support of human rights;
- Enforce existing law;
- Sanction violations consistently and coherently;

In practice:

Laws are often poorly enforced, e.g. India



Source: Leisinger, K.M., (2006) On Corporate Responsibility for Human Rights



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# Sustainable Corporate Story?

In 1995 Nike was accused of having children as young as 10 making shoes, clothing and footballs in Pakistan and Cambodia

“If Nike wants to be taken seriously as a company interested in corporate responsibility then it needs to engage honestly with its critics in the human rights community. Unfortunately the company's new corporate responsibility report fails to do this.” (Tim Connor of NikeWatch, 2001)



Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
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# Sustainable Corporate Story?





Characteristics	Consequences	Company perspective		
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# Sustainable Corporate Story?

Philip Knight (2001): Our age standards are the highest in the world: 18 for footwear manufacturing, 16 for apparel and equipment, or local standards whenever they are higher. But in some countries (e.g. Bangladesh and Pakistan) those standards are next to impossible to verify, when records of birth do not exist or can be easily forged.



Problem with 'strict' and 'narrow' application of code: closing down of factories in Bangladesh (because of child labour) brought these children to (1) criminality and (2) child prostitution

## Problems related to business formula:

1. **Hollow factory (Nike):** higher change of human rights problems in suppliers; Nike still has problems and probably will keep these
2. **European firms:** more successful than American (and much more successful than Asian firms)
3. **Producers for local market (Bata):** higher wages and better working conditions than export oriented producers

Source:  
The Independent, 2001