

Press Release

## **Business, Government, and NGOs join forces in a new Platform for Business and Human Rights in Lausanne**

**Lausanne, Switzerland, 27 September 2015 – Business School Lausanne (BSL) unveiled the launch of a new Platform for Business and Human Rights during its annual Business-for-Society Forum held on Saturday 26 September at the Beau-Rivage Palace in Lausanne. The Platform aims to enable and advance the integration of human rights in business school studies, foster thought leadership and carry out relevant research. Backed by leaders of 15 multinational businesses and NGOs, the Platform hopes to be an example for educational institutions globally.**

The Advisory Board of the *BSL Platform for Business and Human Rights* includes senior leaders from Unilever, ABB, IKEA Switzerland, UNICEF, WaterLex, the Institute for Human Rights and Business, Amnesty International, Transparency International, The Forest Trust, Equiception, Lundin Petroleum, The Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), UNI Global Union, and The Paradigm Forum. Endorsed by Mary Robinson, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Platform is initially set up and funded by Business School Lausanne and operates under the umbrella of its *People and Planet Hub*.

The Platform seeks to help business students and the business world advance in their understanding and respect for human rights. “Our aim is to raise awareness of the importance and implications of the vital human rights issues that affect society and business today,” said Mary Mayenfisch-Tobin, experienced lawyer and solicitor and the driving force behind this initiative at Business School Lausanne. “We believe that deepening the understanding of the public and future business leaders will lead to changes in behavior, changes that will be beneficial for society as a whole.”

The announcement of the *BSL Platform for Business and Human Rights* was made in the presence of 500 stakeholders from more than 40 countries who attended the BSL Business for Society Forum on September 26. Moderated by journalist Tony Johnston, the forum provided the participating panelists, Christine Batruch, Vice President Corporate Responsibility, Lundin Petroleum, Michael Bride, Deputy Director, United Food Commercial Workers, U.S. & Canada, and Ron Popper, Head of Corporate Responsibility, ABB, an opportunity to share their perspective on key human rights challenges the world is facing today. The panelists also made recommendations on how Business School Lausanne could engage in overcoming these challenges as a learning hub for students of 60 nationalities.

The *BSL Platform for Business and Human Rights* will serve as a meeting ground for discussions about vital human rights issues with business leaders, civil society, governments and the general public. Such debates aim to shed light on complex problems which require a multi-stakeholder dialogue to identify viable solutions. “Often issues that are crucial to our planet and its people are inadequately discussed in educational institutions, in media, and in our society today and we intend to bridge this gap with the help of our new Platform,” said Dr. Katrin Muff, Dean of Business School Lausanne.

**For further information, please contact:**

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**About Business School Lausanne**

Business School Lausanne (BSL) is a leading innovator in business education and ranks #3 in Switzerland and among the Top 30 business schools in Europe ([QS 2014-15 Top 200 Global Business Schools](#)). The school’s ACBSP accredited degree programs include BBA, Masters, full-time modular MBA, Executive MBA and DBA programs. BSL also provides Executive Training in General Management, Corporate Finance (with preparation for the CFA Level I examination), and Sustainable Business (in collaboration with the University of St Gallen). BSL takes a pragmatic approach to learning by applying theory to practice and is backed by a multidisciplinary faculty of business professionals. BSL attracts students from around the world, creating a multicultural environment of more than 60 nationalities. Established in 1987, BSL is the co-founder of the 50+20 initiative on Management Education for the World ([www.50plus20.org](http://www.50plus20.org)) in partnership with the Global Responsible Leadership Initiative ([www.grli.org](http://www.grli.org)) and the Principles of Responsible Management Education (U.N. backed PRME).