

**THE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION REGULATORY GUIDEBOOK. WASHINGTON: INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT COUNSELORS, INC., 1979. Pp. 145; Appendices.**

In today's interdependent world, no transnational enterprise can afford to ignore activities of international organizations with respect to the framework and ground rules for international business transactions. International organizations constitute a nascent regulatory regime which increasingly conditions the transaction of transnational business. In addition, the normative effect of international organization activities upon Nation-States and juridical persons cannot be underestimated. International organizations have done no less than establish the foundations for a new international economic order. In this context, executives for transnational enterprises may wish to examine the 1979 edition of *The Multinational Corporation Regulatory Guidebook* ("Guidebook"), published by International Business-Government Counselors, Inc., in order to better understand the international regulatory environment in which they are operating.

The *Guidebook* is organized around both key issues and specific international organizations with the focus upon providing a review and status report on all international organization activities which have an impact upon transnational enterprises. Some of the more important issues treated are international technology transfer, restrictive business practices, international accounting standards, expropriation, illicit payments, and transfer pricing. The substantive activities and concerns of the various international organizations are discussed and the institutional relationships among them are delineated. The *Guidebook* enhances its usefulness by giving the names of persons connected with specific international organizations and by providing a 1979 calendar of activities affecting transnational enterprises for many of the international organizations. Presentation of information in a briefing book format and style will greatly aid those executives who need to assimilate a large amount of information about the international regulatory environment in a short period of time. Its helpful glossary of international organizations protects the reader from the alphabet soup syndrome.

The *Guidebook* is not without its weaknesses. It could stand expansion. One looks in vain for adequate coverage of issues respecting East-West trade and the socialist countries. A discussion of

industrial standardization and harmonization efforts by international organizations is also lacking. In addition, since transnational enterprises are great owners and licensors of intellectual property, one wonders why the section on the European Economic Community did not include a discussion of European patents. Finally, and most disturbing, is the absence of a section on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade ("GATT") as an international organization. This omission is particularly inexplicable in light of the codes recently negotiated under the auspices of the GATT Secretariat in the Tokyo Round of multilateral trade negotiations.<sup>1</sup>

Sections of the *Guidebook* generally need greater depth and perspective. For instance, to improve its discussion of the new international economic order, the authors would do well to provide depth by consulting the United Nations Institute for Training and Research ("UNITAR") publications for background materials from 1945 to the present date. A more informed perspective on the part of the reader could be promoted through the addition of footnotes, cited authorities, and even named authors. As the book is presently written, the reader must rely upon International Business-Government Counselors, Inc., alone for many of the conclusory statements made in the text. For those of us who like to read the label before we eat, this simply will not do.

Finally, although it may go without saying, the *Guidebook* should not in any event be utilized as a substitute for the advice of experienced private counsel with respect to specific questions concerning the activities of an international organization in relation to a transnational enterprise. However, due to its scope and patent utility, no transnational enterprise would be well-advised to ignore the *Guidebook*.

Rhond Rudolph Roth\*

---

<sup>1</sup> See *Symposium—The Tokyo Round: Its Meaning and Effect*, *supra* at 151.

\* Advisory Attorney, Office of General Counsel, United States International Trade Commission, Washington, D.C.; Member of the District of Columbia Bar and the State Bar of Georgia. The opinions expressed in this review are those of the author alone and do not constitute an opinion of the United States International Trade Commission.