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Special Features

Gurría's OECD – A Hub or Club?

In October 2007, Angel Gurría, the Secretary-General of the OECD received the first ever 'Globalist of the Year' award from the Canadian International Council (CIC) for his contribution to 'global governance and international affairs'. The CIC explains that the award is designed to honour the work of an individual 'working outside his or her national context to promote trans-nationalism, inclusiveness and a global consciousness'. In his acceptance speech, Mr Gurría spoke eloquently about the need to share the benefits of globalisation and to create 'societies in which prosperity leaves no one behind.' But Mr Gurría's efforts apparently stop short of expending diplomatic capital on behalf of globalisation's losers.

On 10 December 2007 (International Human Rights Day), OECD Watch called on Mr Gurría to use his good offices to help defuse the dispute between some of the network members, the Clean Clothes Campaign and the India Committee of the Netherlands, and the Indian authorities. Mr Gurría politely declined. The dispute concerned allegations of serious labour rights violations by the Fibre & Fabrics International Company (FFI) and its subsidiary Jeans Knits Pt. Ltd in Bangalore. The factories had been supplying jeans to OECD retailers, including the Dutch company, G-Star. Efforts to resolve the dispute through the OECD Guidelines procedures had failed and there was a threat that an international arrest warrant would be

issued by the Indian authorities against the two Dutch NGOs on charges related to cyber crime and defamation. In January 2008, thanks to the intervention of the Dutch government, the threat of extradition was withdrawn. The parties have agreed to resolve their disagreements amicably.

OECD Watch is disappointed that Mr Gurría, who after all has a mandate from the G8 to strengthen links with Brazil, China, South Africa and India and to establish a dialogue on inter alia corporate social responsibility, did not feel any responsibility to dispel the Indian authorities' misapprehension that an OECD Guidelines' complaint is tantamount to 'a non-tariff barrier to trade'. Civil society will take some persuading that under Mr Gurría's leadership the OECD really is moving beyond its traditional ethos – an exclusive club for the wealthy – and becoming 'a hub of globalisation' that aims to increase well-being and prosperity for all.

The Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative

The Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative (CSRI) at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government has produced a set of draft Principles for Effective Human Rights- Based Grievance Mechanisms which have been discussed at consultations arranged in relation to the mandate of Secretary-General's Special Representative on business and human rights, John Ruggie.

The CSRI project, which is funded by the British Government, has been running for one year. One of the aims of the project is to outline the criteria that should underpin all grievance mechanisms and to ensure that they operate in a way that is compatible with human rights. The focus of the work is to encourage companies to deal with labour or community grievances promptly and in an appropriate way thereby reducing the likelihood of the issues escalating and attracting unwelcome international publicity. It distils and adapts the lessons from the experience of multilateral development banks such as the World Bank's Inspection Panel and the Compliance Adviser and Ombudsman, the OECD

Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the Ethical Trading Initiative and the nascent procedures of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. By focusing on the local, company level, the draft guide sidesteps the issue of determination of fault. The emphasis is on dispute resolution.

The draft Principles are primarily directed at large multinationals in the extractive, construction and garment industries that are sufficiently concerned about their reputation to expend time and resources on developing effective grievance mechanisms. For some observers the draft Principles might seem to be giving further encouragement to the privatisation of human rights, the fragmentation of standards and a diminution of efforts to strengthen the rule of law at a national and international level. Others will see them as offering a pragmatic solution to local conflicts and a means of providing rapid and effective remedies without resort to the courts. CSRI acknowledges these different perceptions of its project which will run for another year when it is hoped that the draft principles will be tested in the field.

Responsible Business Conduct in China

Corporate social responsibility in China remains a hot topic for business, governments and civil society. A key aspect is the applicability and effectiveness of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises in China as a non-member country.

Responsible business practice for both Chinese enterprises operating abroad and foreign business conduct in China remains a significant challenge. The OECD has identified co-operation with China as a key priority. China's promotion of a code of responsible business conduct that is compatible with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises is a hoped for outcome of the current co-operation between the OECD and the Chinese government.

The Responsible Business Conduct in China (RBC) project aims to encourage corporate accountability in China, and by Chinese enterprises operating abroad. This includes

Chinese business practices in China, Chinese enterprises operating in the OECD area and Chinese enterprises operating in third country markets such as Africa. Of concern, is the obvious lack of focus on the business practices of OECD enterprises, large and small, in China, though direct investment, joint ventures or sourcing of goods and services.

OECD Watch (as does BIAAC and TUAC) welcomes the project and recognizes the inherent sensitivities. The program is diverse and ambitious in its scope, and the willingness of the Chinese government to participate suggests the slow but steady acceptance of corporate social responsibility in China. For the project to reach its full potential and meet stakeholder expectations, it is critical that all aspects (inward and outward) of business conduct and investment are included.

In this context, the project appears to have an over-emphasis on outward investment strategies. This focus ignores the significant power and responsibility that OECD enterprises doing business in China have to influence sustainable business development, comply with China's labor law, and uphold the principles of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

The project provides opportunities for OECD Watch and appropriate NGO's and individuals to contribute to the planned multi-stakeholder symposium, seminars, peer learning and experience sharing in the effective use of the OECD Guidelines to progress responsible business conduct in China. A multistakeholder approach will assist in identifying workable solutions to the many challenges. To date, OECD Watch members Rights and Accountability in Development (UK) and the Brotherhood of St Laurence (Australia) have provided the OECD Investment Committee with expert knowledge regarding the activities and responsibilities of Chinese companies operating in the mining sector in Africa, and OECD companies and their supply chain and labour rights responsibilities in China. The RBC project is being managed by Ken Davies, Senior Economic Adviser, OECD Investment Division. His China knowledge and expertise brings credibility to the project.

However, it is the response from the Chinese government that will best demonstrate the likelihood of China developing a CSR mechanism that is compatible with the OECD Guidelines and meets stakeholder expectations of corporate accountability. The postponement of planned symposiums by Chinese officials has raised concern among the growing and diverse NGO's who are watching this project with interest.

CASE NEWS

OECD Guidelines do apply to Banks and Financial Institutions

OECD Watch welcomes the Swedish NCP's conclusion that "the Guidelines can and do apply to the financial sector as well as to other multinational enterprises". This unambiguous decision in a complaint concerning Nordea, a Scandinavian bank, firmly establishes the applicability of the OECD's Guidelines to financial institutions. The statement, which was endorsed by the Norwegian NCP, should put an end to the confusion that was created by the Australian NCP when he refused to accept a complaint against the ANZ Banking Group for funding unsustainable logging in Papua New Guinea. In OECD Watch's view there was never any valid reason for excluding the finance sector from the purview of the Guidelines. The Australian NCP, speaking at the Annual Conference of the Australian Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility in Sydney last February, told delegates that while he agreed with the outcome of the ANZ complaint, it had not been handled well.

The complaint against Nordea was filed by the Centro de Derechos Humanos y Ambiente, CEDHA, an Argentinean NGO, and Bellona from Norway. It followed their initial complaint against a company, Finnish Metsa Botnia, for the construction of a controversial pulp mill project (Orion) in Uruguay in which the Finnish Export Credit Agency (Finnerva) is a co-investor. The Finnish NCP dismissed that complaint. CEDHA argued that Nordea Bank was in violation of the Guidelines in two respects: first, through its part financing of the Orion paper mill, and second, by refusing to provide information about its dealings with Botnia. Apart from providing \$300,000 of its own funds towards the pulp mill project, Nordea also helped arrange finance from other banks and financial intermediaries. The Swedish NCP took into account the dismissal by the Finnish NCP of the Botnia complaint, and concluded that there was no indication that Nordea had violated the Guidelines. However, the Swedish NCP took a firm stance as regards the applicability of the Guidelines to banks and other financial institutions. The Swedish State also has a significant sharing holding in Nordea, which is listed on the Stockholm, Helsinki and Copenhagen stock exchanges. The Norwegian NCP worked closely with his Swedish counterpart on the case.

In the final statement, the Swedish National Contact Point reminded Nordea and other financial sector actors about the need "to be sensitive to the public's increasing

demands for information" – a key request by CEDHA and Bellona - and encouraged them to be as transparent as possible. While the complaint was being examined, Nordea adopted the Equator Principles and acceded to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, which, according to the Swedish NCP was a positive illustration of the way in which the Guidelines can contribute to responsible corporate behaviour.

CEDHA also welcomed the 'landmark decision' upholding the principle that financial institutions can be held to account for their lending decisions under the OECD Guidelines' procedures. The opinion of both the Swedish and Norwegian NCPs in the Nordea case should consolidate the position, endorsed by NCPs at the June 2007 OECD Roundtable, that the finance sector is subject to the same corporate accountability framework and principles as other enterprises engaged in cross-border activity.

Iraq Oil-for-Food Complaint Rejected: German NCP Misses Opportunity for Reinforcing Anti-Bribery Message

Transparency International – Germany (TI-G) criticised the German NCP for applying a highly restrictive, one-size-fits-all approach to the OECD Guidelines after its complaint related to 57 German companies allegedly implicated in the Iraq Oil-for-Food scandal was rejected. In October 2005 the Independent Inquiry Committee chaired by Paul Volcker presented its report (the Volcker Report) on the United Nations' Oil for Food Programme. The Volcker report listed 2,253 companies which had allegedly paid a total of US\$1.8 billion in kickbacks to the Iraqi government to obtain contracts to supply food, medicines and other humanitarian goods to Iraq. Among them are 57 German companies including Siemens, Linde Daimler-Chrysler, Fresenius Medical Care, Schering, Braun Melsungen. According to the Volcker Report, German companies allegedly paid some US\$12 million in bribes. In its complaint TI-G had asked the NCP to examine whether the German companies had breached the Guidelines' anti-bribery provisions (Chapter VI) and to ascertain whether, in view of the evidence presented in the Volcker report, they had subsequently introduced appropriate precautionary measures to prevent any likelihood of such breaches occurring in the future. TI-G maintains that the authoritative evidence provided in the Volcker report should have been more than sufficient to justify an examination by the NCP as to whether a breach of the Guidelines had occurred. TI-G argued that "Alleged breaches by such a large number of companies cannot be ignored without undermining the credibility of the Guidelines".

While acknowledging that initiating a "specific instance" against such a large group of companies was unusual, TI-G pointed out that nothing in the Guidelines' procedures precludes it. In justifying its approach, TI-G stated, "In the given situation it seems to be neither fair nor appropriate to single out a few companies, when 57 are documented as having allegedly been involved in the same illegitimate practices. TI-G does not wish to 'make an example' of particular enterprises, but to encourage all relevant companies, with the assistance of the NCP, to improve their precautionary systems against bribery and to systematically and reliably monitor their functioning." The NCP put forward two reasons for dismissing the complaint: first that the allegations of corruption were related to trade and not to investment activities; and,

second, that the issue was under consideration by the German courts and therefore the NCP could not undertake parallel proceedings. Some NCPs have tried to argue, despite numerous references in the text of the Guidelines to trade, that the Guidelines are intended to apply only to investment by multinational companies. Similarly, some insist that a complaint cannot be dealt with by an NCP if other legal or administrative proceedings are being undertaken into any aspects of a Guidelines' complaint. These are familiar, threadbare excuses for inaction, although the German NCP has never before invoked 'parallel procedures' as a basis for refusing to deal with a specific instance. Informed legal opinion consulted by OECD Watch holds that in very few circumstances would a specific action ever need to be dropped to avoid prejudicing criminal proceedings. According to media reports, charges against a few companies have been dismissed, others are still the subject of judicial proceedings and some have been settled with fines. OECD Watch's view is that other proceedings - whether criminal, civil or administrative - can never determine compliance with the Guidelines. With its assessment of the inadmissibility of the Oil-for-Food complaint, the German NCP, which already had a reputation for applying a highly restrictive interpretation of the Guidelines, has surpassed itself. According to Shirley van Buiren, chairperson of TI-G's working group on Corporate Accountability, the NCP's decision was "far from inevitable much less mandatory". The NCP has missed an opportunity for sending a clear signal to all German companies that they are expected to operate in conformity with the standards and principles set out in the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. TI-G wrote to the German Minister for Economics and Technology, Michael Glos, requesting that he review the NCP's rejection of the case, but on 19 February 2008, TI was informed that the rejection is being upheld on previously argued grounds.

OECD Watch News

Conference on the OECD Guidelines and EITI in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

In early September 2007 ACIDH and RAID jointly organised a two day conference in Lubumbashi, in the DRC to launch their booklet for African NGOs on the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) *Comprendre Les Principes Directeurs de l'OCDE pour les Entreprises Multinationales et Les Principes de l'Initiative pour la Transparence dans les Industries Extractives*. There were fifty participants including NGOs from all over Katanga (Kolwezi, Lisaki, Kipushi) and from a number of different provinces including Kasai Oriental, Maniema and North Kivu. Congolese government officials, the South African consul and representatives of mining companies including: First Quantum Minerals, Anvil Mining, Boss Mining, SOMIKA and the Forrest Group also participated. The meeting discussed how the OECD Guidelines and EITI might be implemented effectively in the DRC. There was considerable coverage of the event in the local and national media.

Recommendations from the conference included a call for the DRC to create its own National Contact Point or Ombudsman for dealing with complaints about companies. Participants also urged the Congolese Government to comply with its obligations under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. 17,000 copies of the brochure were printed and have been distributed in Katanga and throughout the DRC, including Kinshasa. [The booklet is available at: http://www.raid-uk.org/docs/Guidelines/Guide_to_Guidelines_FR.pdf]

OECD Watch and Eurosif discuss OECD Guidelines' usefulness for socially responsible investors

In October 2007 the second in a series of two dialogue sessions was held in Paris, the first had taken place earlier in the year between OECD Watch and the European Social Investment Forum (Eurosif). The dialogue with socially responsible investors (SRI) and rating agencies is part of an EU-funded joint project that aims to promote the use of the OECD Guidelines among the SRI community. Some 20 participants including fund managers, ethical banks, pension funds, NGOs and a trade union representative discussed the OECD Guidelines as a CSR tool and how it could be made more useful for responsible investors. Participants assessed the level of detail and range of standards contained in the

Guidelines, as well as how CSR indicators, linked to each of the ten chapters that make up the Guidelines, could be developed. Two concrete examples of specific instances were used to illustrate how the human rights and supply chain provisions in the Guidelines are being interpreted.

Socially responsible investors expressed interest in using the specific instance procedures as a basis for investment decisions. But in the absence of clear statements by NCPs as to whether a company has breached the Guidelines its difficult for SRI agencies to use the outcomes in their investment decisions. There was agreement that the instrument would need to become more of an arbitration or adjudication system capable of resolving investment disputes for it to be truly useful to the SRI community. The investment community, with the socially responsible investors taking the lead, can act as a very influential driver in promoting corporate responsibility. The SRI community's interest in this project reveals that there are opportunities for the OECD Investment Committee to use this influence to help ensure implementation of and compliance with the Guidelines throughout the business community.

As part of this project, OECD Watch and Eurosif developed four fact sheets:

Fact Sheet #1 in the series provides an introduction as to how the SRI community can make use of the OECD Guidelines.

Fact Sheet #2 outlines the relevant content of the ten chapters of the OECD Guidelines for the SRI community, making links to key CSR indicators and presenting key questions for use in developing a profile of a company's practices.

Fact Sheet #3 examines how the SRI community can assess adherence to the human rights provision of the OECD Guidelines.

Fact Sheet #4 sets out how the SRI community can assess adherence to the supply chain provision of the OECD Guidelines.

Indian Government withholds clearance for OECD Watch inter-regional seminar

A necessary permit for OECD Watch's inter-regional seminar, scheduled to take place at the end of October in Kochi, South India, was withheld in a last-minute decision by state government authorities. In recent months, Indian

NGOs have experienced mounting pressure stemming from their involvement in the escalating case of labour rights abuses in Fibres and Fabrics International (FFI) factories (see editorial). There are concerns that the withholding of the permit was intended to obstruct the efforts of OECD Watch and its Indian members to improve labour conditions for garment factory workers supplying European retailers.

Although the seminar was formally cancelled and many of the expected participants were unable to attend, a number of NGO representatives were still able to meet informally in Kochi to exchange experiences about the OECD Guidelines and discuss concrete cases and corporate accountability issues and strategies. The OECD Watch members present also held an in-depth training session for a number of NGOs with potential OECD Guidelines cases on how to conduct research and draft a complaint. This session included a debate on managing the potential difficulties, costs and risks associated with filing cases. There was also a discussion on steps OECD Watch could take to help protect the rights of NGOs involved in Guidelines cases. There was a discussion about OECD Watch's operating principles, strategy and approach to the OECD Guidelines as a corporate accountability tool. The informal meeting concluded with field visits to a number of factories where participants observed working conditions in the garment, automobile, engineering, IT and call centre industries.

OECD Watch organises multi-stakeholder debate on improving the OECD Guidelines

On 15 June 2007, OECD Watch brought together more than 120 representatives from different sectors - government, business, trade union and civil society - to review the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and to consider their potential to contribute to common global standards and principles. The Roundtable, ambitiously entitled *A Model for Change: Upward Harmonisation of OECD Guidelines Procedures*, was a timely event given the calls for the NCP procedures to be strengthened issued by the G8, the European Parliament and John Ruggie, the United Nations' Secretary-General's Special Representative on Business and Human Rights.

The morning session included keynote speeches from Manfred Schekulin, Chair of the Investment Committee; Stephane Ouaki, Deputy Head of Cabinet of the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; Richard Howitt, Member of the European Parliament; Gareth Llewellyn, National Grid; Veronica

Nilsson, TUAC; and Gerald Pachoud, Special Advisor to Professor John Ruggie.

The subsequent discussion confirmed the importance of the OECD Guidelines as a leading CSR instrument, and there was a general consensus that NCP procedures need to be harmonised and improved for the instrument to reach its full potential. While it was accepted that most improvements are needed at the national level by strengthening NCP performance, participants recognised that the oversight function of the OECD Investment Committee could also be improved. One of the recommendations for the European Commission was that a European National Contact Point office should be established with a remit to harmonise European NCP practices; to support the work of European NCPs, particularly those from new states and to promote inter-NCP learning.

After the keynote addresses, Patricia Feeney of RAID presented the results of the OECD Watch "Model NCP" survey. The "Model NCP", based on the findings from extensive consultations conducted over a four-month period in early 2007 among government officials, trade unions, business representatives and NGOs in 20 OECD countries, is OECD Watch's constructive contribution to the debate about how to make the work of the NCPs more effective. The "Model NCP" outlines recommendations for enhancing NCP procedures and provides NCPs with practical suggestions for improving the handling of specific instances.

Participants spent the afternoon in parallel sessions looking at four critical issues: climate change, the legal status of the Guidelines, corruption, and the relevance of the Guidelines for financial institutions. In the legal session, the French association, Sherpa, presented its study on the evolving legal status of the OECD Guidelines. Sherpa put forward the case that the OECD Guidelines are not a purely voluntary instrument and that over time they could develop into international customary law. Finally, in the session on the role of the Guidelines for financial institutions, the application of the Guidelines to this sector was debated, and the notion of sphere of influence and boundaries of responsibilities were discussed.

The event was ably chaired by Paul Hohnen.

New OECD Watch members

Twelve new organisations have joined OECD Watch, bringing the total number of members to 79 organisations from 41 countries. OECD Watch would like to issue a warm welcome to the following new members:

BanglaPraxis, Bangladesh

BanglaPraxis is a policy research and campaign organization monitoring trans-national flow of capital (through International Financial Institutions, investment, TNCs) with the goal of empowering communities, protecting environment and promoting alternatives. <http://banglapraxis.wordpress.com>

Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation, Malawi

The work of the Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR) includes the dissemination of information on corporate governance, promotion of the OECD Guidelines to policy makers, advocacy for adherence to the OECD guidelines by multinational enterprises operating in developing countries and campaigning towards binding regulations for multinationals.

Fondation pour le Développement au Sahel, Mali

The Fondation pour le Développement au Sahel (FDS) is a non-governmental organisation, created in 1991 that primarily works on the fields of environment, education, and health. As part of its environment programme, FDS works with communities affected by the extractives industry and as part of the Malian Civil Society Coalition. FDS is also a member of the Malian National Steering Committee of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), in which context FDS works on the issue of gold mining.

Fundación Promoción Humana, Argentina

The principal work of Fundación Promoción Humana (FPH) is the training of community leaders from popular, farmer, and cooperative organizations. This central task is complemented with studies and investigations on subjects and problems related to sustainable development, as well as elaborating and publishing bibliographical material and support documents for the training. FPH coordinates all of its research and training with the Universidad de Trabajadores de America Latina (Fundación UTAL), which is located in Caracas, Venezuela.

Global Witness, United Kingdom

Global Witness works on the links between the exploitation of natural resources, conflict and corruption. In this context, Global Witness documents and monitors the activities of companies operating in the natural resource sector, as well as governments and other actors. The OECD Guidelines are one of several mechanisms Global Witness uses to try to hold multinational companies to account for activities that violate human rights or contribute to other types of abuses. Global Witness also views the Guidelines as a way of encouraging the governments of OECD countries to fulfil their responsibility to hold these companies to account. Global Witness was a member of the Joint Working Group that submitted recommendations to the British government on new procedures to strengthen the implementation of the Guidelines in the UK. The organisation continues to monitor and comment on the implementation of these procedures. In 2007, under these new procedures, Global Witness filed a complaint against a British company for violations of the OECD Guidelines in the Democratic Republic of Congo. www.globalwitness.org

Green Day Association, Philippines

Green Day Association was formed to promote and foster the defence of the environment. The Association works with non-governmental organizations to monitor the behaviour of corporate entities and encourage corporate responsibility for actions that affect the environment, and. Toward this end, Green Day Association also facilitates exchange of information, knowledge and expertise among the members of the Association.

Les Amis de la Terre - Friends of the Earth France

Les Amis de la Terre France belongs to the FoE International Network and coordinates the network's campaigns on corporations and international financial institutions (IFIs) at the French level. In the past several years, Les Amis de la Terre has been particularly active on French private banking, and in 2007 it began a CSR campaign with a particular focus on multinational enterprises in the extractives (oil and mining) industry. www.lesamisdelaterre.org

Oxfam Australia

Oxfam Australia is an independent, not-for-profit, secular, community-based aid and development organisation. Across 27 countries, Oxfam Australia works in partnership with local communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Through its Mining Ombudsman campaign, Oxfam Australia works with local and indigenous communities affected by Australian extractive industry companies. Oxfam Australia works to assist communities in understanding their rights under international law and to demonstrate the need for enforceable, transparent and binding extraterritorial controls that require Australian mining companies – wherever they operate – to adhere to universal human rights standards. Oxfam Australia's Labour Rights Advocacy also has an interest in following developments at the Australian National Contact Point as part of its work supporting the rights of workers producing branded sportswear in Asia. www.oxfam.org.au

Programme Laboral de Desarrollo, Peru

Programa Laboral de Desarrollo (PLADES) is a multidisciplinary team of professionals dedicated to social and labour issues. With the issue of gender equality central in its work, and collaborating strategically with the national and international labour union movement, PLADES' vision is to be a reference point in the monitoring of labour standards and the building of capacity among labour and social organizations in Peru and the rest of Latin America. By promoting high labour and social standards, PLADES works toward a model for development that is global, equitable, sustainable and democratic. www.plades.org.pe

SPEAK, United Kingdom

SPEAK is a UK-based network of students and young adults who campaign and pray about global justice issues. SPEAK currently runs two campaigns: The Big Dress Campaign (named after its fabric petition, the biggest dress in the world) calling for greater legal accountability of multinational companies for their social and environmental impacts at a national, regional and international level, and Counting the Cost calling for an end to UK government promotion and support of the arms

trade due to its negative impact on conflict, human rights and development. At the heart of SPEAK's campaigns is a vision of the need for corporate accountability. To this end, SPEAK is committed to testing the OECD Guidelines, as one of the few mechanisms available for holding companies to account, and working towards binding regulation of multinationals. www.speak.org.uk

Trade Union Rights Centre, Indonesia

The Trade Union Rights Centre (TURC) is an NGO that supports the independent union movement in Indonesia through advocacy and research. TURC also provides training and education for workers, providing courses such as Labour Law for Trade Unionists and International Labour Standard Training. TURC has recently been involved in the filing of an OECD Guidelines complaint against Bridgestone Tyre Indonesia. www.turc.or.id

Workers' Assistance Centre, Philippines

The Workers' Assistance Centre (WAC) is a non-governmental organization that advocates workers' rights. It supports the formation of workers' organizations and unions in the province of Cavite, particularly in the special economic zones. By means of providing appropriate education and training to workers, WAC seeks to raise workers' consciousness about their rights and improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes. WAC also provides a venue for the participation of the middle class sectors in workers' issues and struggles. WAC hopes that by joining OECD Watch it can strengthen the international campaign against abuses of workers rights by multinational companies. In September 2007, WAC co-filed an OECD Guidelines case against two South Korean companies for abuses of workers' rights in the Philippines. www.wacphilippines.com.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OECD Watch is an international network of 79 members from 41 different countries promoting corporate accountability. The purpose of OECD Watch is to test the effectiveness of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and to inform the wider NGO community about the policies and activities of the OECD's Investment Committee.

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The following OECD Watch members contributed to this newsletter: Serena Lillywhite (Brotherhood of St. Laurence), Emmanuel Umpula (ACIDH), Daniel Taillant (CEDHA), Shirley van Buiren (Transparency International-Germany), Joseph Wilde-Ramsing (SOMO), Joris Oldenziel (SOMO) and Simche Heringa (SOMO).

We also appreciate translation provided by Tamara Slowik (Spanish) and Emmanuel Prinnet (French).

This publication has been made possible through funding from the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oxfam Novib, MISEREOR and EED (Germany).

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH

- 25 - 26th • OECD Investment Committee meetings and consultations with BIAC, TUAC and NGOs, Paris
- 27 - 28th • OECD Global Forum on International Investment VII, Paris.
More info www.oecd.org/investment/gfi-7

APRIL

- 24 - 25th • Training seminar on the OECD Guidelines organized by ORCADE, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Socially Responsible Development in the Context of the OECD Guidelines organized by FARN, Buenos Aires, Argentina (date to be confirmed)

MAY

- 10th • Training seminar on the OECD Guidelines organized by Sherhi-Citizens for a Better Future, Karachi, Pakistan
- 26 - 30th • CSR WorldWideWeek, Amsterdam and Brussels, organized by MVO Platform. More info www.mvoplatrofm.nl
- 29th • ECCJ Conference "Legislative opportunities to improve corporate accountability at EU level", Brussels, more info www.corporatejustice.org

JUNE

- 23rd • OECD Roundtable on Corporate Responsibility, Paris
- 24 - 25th • OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises: Annual meeting of the National Contact Points, Paris
- 26th • OECD Watch Coordination Committee meeting, Paris, France (tbc)

OCTOBER

- 6 - 10th • OECD Investment Committee meetings and consultations with BIAC, TUAC and NGOs, Paris
- International Network on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net) Strategy Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya (date to be confirmed)

NOVEMBER

- OECD Watch Interregional Training Seminar Latin America

DECEMBER

- 15 - 17th • OECD Investment Committee meetings and consultations with BIAC, TUAC and NGOs, Paris