

Conference

IMPROVING ACCESS TO REMEDY IN EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

Practical perspectives on challenges and good practices from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Palestine

In conjunction with the 3rd UN Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights

Background & Context

During the 26th session of the Human Rights Council (June 2014), meaningful remedy for victims of human rights violations as a result of business misconduct was largely recognised as an outstanding issue that urgently needs to be addressed. Human rights of the affected communities, including the rights to life, housing, and livelihood, the rights to access of information and public participation, and the rights to freedom of assembly, opinion, and expression are systematically violated and too often those responsible for such violations are not held accountable. In addition, human rights defenders denouncing negative impacts of business enterprises are increasingly facing threats to their lives.

Although the right to remedy is established in a number of international instruments, its implementation is seriously challenged in the context of transnational business. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights stipulate that States have the obligation to ensure access to remedies for victims of human rights abuses by business enterprises (Article 22). However, action by States has been patchy to date. As a result, access to an effective remedy still represents a main challenge for affected communities.

Purpose of the conference

This event is organised in conjunction with the 3rd UN Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights (1 – 3 December 2014) whose aim is to serve as a key annual venue for stakeholders from all regions to “*discuss trends and challenges in the implementation of the Guiding Principles and promote dialogue and cooperation on issues linked to business and human rights.*” The event will bring together representatives from the affected communities in DRC, Zimbabwe, Colombia, Palestine and the Philippines. The purpose is to provide a space to **share good practices and identify challenges on access to remedy** as well as to **discuss key issues in relation to an international legally binding instrument on business and human rights**. This is a great opportunity for Civil Society Organisations and Faith Based-Organisations to amplify the voices of the affected and advocate for policy changes.

Date/Time: Tuesday, 2 December 2014 / 19:00 – 20:30

Venue: Conference Room (Ground Floor), 1 rue Varembeé (opposite of ITU Building)
1202 Geneva. Tram 15: Nations, Bus 5: Nations

Panelists:

1. Mr. Henri Muhiya, Episcopal Commission on Natural Resources, DRC, by Franciscans International
2. Mr. Mutuso Dhiwayo, Director of Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA), by ACT Alliance
3. Ms. Elisabeth Pèriz Fernández, Representative of Tierra Digna, Colombia, CAFOD partner organisation
4. Ms. Susan Power, Legal Researcher, Palestine, by Al-Haq
5. Mr. Rene Pamplona, Advocacy Officer, Social Action Center of the Diocese of Marbel, Mindanao, the Philippines.

Moderator: Ms. Ana Maria Suarez Franco, Fian International

Organisers: Franciscans International, Fastenopfer, ACT Alliance, Al-Haq, International Catholic Center of Geneva, CAFOD, CIDSE, CARITAS Genève.

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