Open call to join the Week of Mobilization to Stop Corporate Crimes and Impunity at the UNHRC

Social movements demand access to justice for those affected by corporate human rights violations and ecological crimes!

During the UNHRC 26th Session 23-27 June 2014 / In Geneva (Switzerland) and in decentralized actions around the world

#StopCorporateImpunity
We invite all of you who are interested in turning the tide to come and join us in Geneva (Switzerland), June 23-27, 2014.

In June 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) will discuss the adoption of a resolution to establish a legally binding instrument to enforce binding rules regarding human rights and Transnational Corporations (TNCs).

As a result of ongoing violations of human rights by TNCs such as the 2013 Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh that killed 1,132 factory (mostly female) workers, the 2012 Marikana massacre of 34 miners in South Africa, the ongoing destruction caused by Shell in Nigeria’s Ogoniland and by Chevron in the Ecuadorean Amazon as well as the human rights violations linked to the Cerrejon Coal mine in Colombia – along with countless others – the need for radical action to control the devastating violations by TNCs has never been more urgent.

In order to push the UNHRC to adopt this type of binding Treaty, a coalition of social movements, networks and civil society organizations is organizing a full week of mobilization.

The goal of the week of mobilization is not only to pressure the UNHRC on the issue of binding norms for TNCs but also to expose the global political and economic ‘Architecture of Impunity’ that has been protecting the operations of TNCs at the expense of human rights for decades through Investment Agreements (and arbitration tribunals such as World Bank’s ICSID), through the WTO, and a long history of IMF imposed structural adjustment programs now replicated in Europe through the Troika & Competitiveness Pact policies and a number of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), as well as bilateral FTAs such as NAFTA, FTA EU-Colombia, TTIP, TPP and TISA, among others.

In the face of intensifying and increasingly egregious corporate human rights violations and ecological crimes, impacted communities and social movements demand access to justice and a definitive end to the systematic impunity which prevails for transnational corporations.
The Week of Mobilization to Stop Corporate Crimes and Impunity

will take place from 23 to 27 June 2014 in Geneva during the last week of the 26th session of the UNHRC, when the Council will be deciding on this initiative.

This week of activities represents an important convergence moment for social movements and Civil Society Organizations to collectively work for a more profound and effective system to defend human rights from corporate violations, especially the rights of those affected by the environmental crimes and other human rights violations of transnational corporations.

Co-convenors


Swiss movements and organizations: Comité du Forum Social Lémanique, ATTAC Switzerland, SolidaritéS, Coordination Climat Justice Sociale, CETIM, L’Autre Syndicat, UNITERRE.
Week of Mobilization Program

Thursday, June 19

12 - 2pm - Side event  Palais des Nations - Room XXV

Why a treaty on Human Rights and TNCs  Co-sponsored by: FIDH, FIAN, CIEL, IBFAN and Friends of the Earth International and Franciscans International. The aim of this event is to show why binding standards are needed and why existing voluntary guidelines are not sufficient. After the presentation of the cases, an analysis that makes evident the common aspects justifying the creation of the OEWG for the treaty drafting will be made.

Contact: Ana Maria Suarez (Suarez-Franco@fian.org)

Monday, June 23

9am - 6pm  Maison des Associations - Ghandi Room

Permanent Peoples Tribunal (PPT) Hearing  The Global Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Power & Stop Impunity is working with the Permanent Peoples Tribunal (PPT) and with Swiss-based social organizations and movements to organize a one-day event of the PPT in order to examine cases where victims of human rights violations perpetrated by TNCs would have increased their potential of access to justice and remediation/compensation if a binding international treaty existed. Some of the cases that will be heard include Chevron in Ecuadorean Amazon, Shell in Nigeria, Glencore in several countries (such as the Philippines, Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Peru and Colombia), Pacific Rim in El Salvador, Lonmin in South Africa, Coca-cola in Colombia, Mekorot in Palestine and Hidralia in Guatemala. The PPT is one of the few international institutions where affected communities can directly present cases of violations of human rights perpetrated by Transnational Corporations.

Contact: Diana Aguiar (d.aguiar@tni.org)
The PPT will close with the Launch of the Base document of the Peoples Treaty "Rights to People & Obligations to TNCs" and its Global Consultation Process. The PPT provides an excellent opportunity to launch of the base document of the Peoples Treaty “Rights to People & Obligations to TNCs” and to formally begin a Global Consultation Process to social movements, grassroots organizations, campaigns and social networks. The Peoples Treaty is a radical alternative proposal which aims, on one hand, to establish control mechanisms to halt human rights violations committed by transnational corporations and, on the other hand, to offer a framework for popular education and alliance building between communities and social movements in order to reclaim public space for alternatives to the corporate regime. The Peoples Treaty is a political and regulatory project for justice from below that draws its meaning from concrete examples of resistance and alternatives to corporate power. This global consultation intends to further enrich and consolidate the Peoples Treaty, culminating with a Peoples’ Assembly in the last quarter of 2015.

Contact: Gonzalo Berron (gonzalo.berron@tni.org)

Tuesday, June 24

9am - 5pm  Maison des Associations

Human rights compliant and sustainable food systems

(Strategy meeting for a predetermined group of participants. It will be open to a limited number of additional participants upon prior application (deadline June 17). The seminar will bring together social movements and other relevant civil society actors to analyse from different perspectives, including those of peasants, women and agricultural workers, the human rights-challenges related to current agribusiness-dominated food systems and strategize how alternative, human rights-compliant and sustainable models can be achieved. Day one and two will explore how the right to adequate food and nutrition as well as other human rights are affected at the different stages of the production chain while day three will concentrate on the extraterritorial obligations States have with regard to transnational corporations operating in the food and nutrition sector.

Contact & Applications: Rolf Künne (kuennem@fian.org)
11am - 12.30pm Swiss press club (CSP) 

Press conference 

(Route de Ferney, 106)

Contact: Laurent Gaberell (contact@cetim.ch) 
and Richard Girard (richard@polarisinstitute.org)

Side event – 12 - 2pm Palais des Nations - Room XXIV

Human Rights Violations and Extractive Activities 
Co-sponsored by: FI, Fastenopfer, Tampakan Forum, CIDSE, MISEREOR (TBC) - The side event will aim to address major human rights violations related to the extractive industry in Latin American and Asian Countries.

Contact: Budi Tjahjono (b.tjahjono@fiop.org)

Side event – 2 - 4pm Palais des Nations - Room XXIV

A binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations: the urgency to ensure access to justice to those affected by corporate violations 
Organized by the Global Campaign Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity - A number of Campaign members have submitted written statements to the UNHRC on landmark cases of corporate human rights violations that remain unpunished (Chevron in Ecuadorean Amazon, Shell in Nigeria, Glencore in the Philippines, Pacific Rim in El Salvador, Coca-cola in Colombia), where access to justice was denied. The statements emphasize the need for binding international norms on TNCs that will increase the potential for access to justice for victims. In this side event, representatives of the victims of such violations will present testimonies. In addition to hearing testimonies, the final statement of the Permanent Peoples Tribunal will be presented during the event.

Contacto: Diana Aguiar (d.aguiar@tni.org) y Laurent (contact@cetim.ch)

Public event – 8pm Maison des Associations

Testimonies from the Global South against Corporate Impunity 
Organized by Swiss co-convenors - In this public event, victims of corporate violations from the Global South will give testimonies and have a moment to exchange with the audience.

Contact: Laurent (contact@cetim.ch), Olivier de Marcellus (elviejo@greenmail.ch) and Juan Tortosa (juan.tortosa@sunrise.ch)
Wednesday, June 25

9am - 5pm **Maison des Associations**
Human rights compliant and sustainable food systems (second day)  See above.

4pm in front of the **Palais des Nations** – entrance at Place des Nations
"STOP CORPORATE CRIMES AND IMPUNITY" Picket
As UN delegates and representatives from country missions leave the UN building, social movements will voice the need for binding norms on the activities of transnational corporations and to demand an end to systematic corporate human rights violations.

**Contact:** Olivier de Marcellus (elviejo@greenmail.ch) and Juan Tortosa (juan.tortosa@sunrise.ch)

6pm leaving the **Palais des Nations**
Impunity tour  The tour of social movements will go to landmark Transnational Corporations headquarters in Geneva denouncing their roles in human rights violations that remain unpunished.

**Contact:** Olivier de Marcellus (elviejo@greenmail.ch) and Juan Tortosa (juan.tortosa@sunrise.ch)

Thursday, June 26

9am - 12pm **Maison des Associations**
Human rights compliant and sustainable food systems (third day)  See above.

Side event – 10am -12pm **Palais des Nations – Room XXIV**
**We defend the environment, we defend human rights**
Organized by Friends of the Earth International.  Denouncing violence against environmental defenders from the experience of Friends of the Earth International.

**Contact:** Lucia Ortiz (lucia@natbrasil.org.br)
Friday, June 27

(Time and Venue TBC)

Treaty Alliance assessment and Next Steps

(Time and Venue TBC)

Follow up of UNCHR voting process (See below in Permanent)

Permanent Palais des Nations

Photo Exhibition Organized by Friends of the Earth International.

Monitoring Desk Follow the negotiations & Process in the UNHRC.

19 Thursday Side Event at UNHRC: Why a treaty on Human Rights and TNCs

23 Monday Permanent Peoples Tribunal Hearing / Launch of the Base document of the Peoples Treaty “Rights to People & Obligations to TNCs” and its Global Consultation Process

24 Tuesday Human rights compliant and sustainable food systems (formal sign up with FIAN necessary in advance)

25 Wednesday Side Event at UNHRC: A binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations: the urgency to ensure access to justice to those affected by corporate violations

26 Thursday Public event: Testimonies from the Global South against Corporate Impunity

27 Friday Impunity Picket & Tour


Side Event at UNHRC: We defend the environment, we defend human rights

Maison des Associations

Palais des Nations
Joint Statement

Call for an international legally binding instrument on human rights, transnational corporations and other business enterprises

www.treatymovement.com/sign-on

This statement has been endorsed by a wide alliance of international networks, organizations and social movements, listed below.* It represents the collective expression of a growing mobilization of global civil society calling for further enhancement of international legal standards to address corporate infringements of human rights. It welcomes the recent initiatives by States in the United Nations Human Rights Council to develop an international treaty on legally binding rules for TNCs on human rights issues.

We, the undersigned organisations,

Concerned about the continuing abuses and violations of human rights occurring all over the world which directly or indirectly engage the responsibility of business enterprises;
Concerned also that such abusive conduct often disproportionately impacts women, who comprise the majority of workers in the most vulnerable sectors, peasants, indigenous peoples, racialized communities, persons living in poverty, children among others, and especially concerned by the fact that justice is denied to those who suffer harm,

Considering the invaluable work done by human rights defenders and organisations, trade unions, indigenous rights and women rights defenders and others defending and protecting human rights in the face of corporate-related abuses,

* This statement was originally drafted by participants in the first annual Peoples’ Forum on Human Rights and Business. The Forum was convened jointly by ESCR-Net and Forum-Asia from 5 to 7 November in Bangkok, Thailand.
Concerned at the incidence of attacks, harassment, restrictions, intimidation and reprisals against these human rights defenders,

Considering the initiatives taken by some States within and outside the United Nations human rights bodies as well as the action and work undertaken by human rights experts and bodies of the United Nations to provide better protection of human rights in the context of business operations,

Recalling existing States’ obligations under global and regional human rights treaties and the need to implement and complement those treaties to make them effective in the context of the operations of transnational corporations.

Convinced of the need to enhance the international legal framework, including international remedies, applicable to State action to protect rights in the context of business operations, and mindful of the urgent need to ensure access to justice and remedy and reparations for victims of corporate human rights abuse,

1. Call upon the States to elaborate an international treaty that:

a) Affirms the applicability of human rights obligations to the operations of transnational corporations and other business enterprises;

b) Requires States Parties to monitor and regulate the operations of business enterprises under their jurisdiction, including when acting outside their
national territory, with a view to prevent the occurrence of abuses of human rights in the course of those operations,
c) Requires States Parties to provide for legal liability for business enterprises for acts or omissions that infringe human rights;
d) Requires States Parties to provide for access to an effective remedy by any State concerned, including access to justice for foreign victims that suffered harm from acts or omissions of a business enterprise in situations where there are bases for the States involved to exercise their territorial or extraterritorial protect- obligations.
e) Provides for an international monitoring and accountability mechanism.
f) Provides for protection of victims, whistle-blowers and human rights defenders that seek to prevent, expose or ensure accountability in cases of corporate abuse and guarantees their right to access to information relevant in this context.

2. Call on the United Nations Human Rights Council to take step towards the elaboration of this treaty, and to that end establish an open ended working group tasked with a drafting mandate.

3. Call on civil society organisations to take measures towards the establishment of a joint initiative to achieve the objective of a legally binding instrument within the United Nations without delay.

www.treatymovement.com/sign-on
Stop Corporate Impunity!