

KAIROS Update on Corporate Social Responsibility

Fall 2007

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NB: Ce bulletin d'information est aussi disponible en français.

Canadian churches join global investor initiative on climate change

Four religious institutions affiliated to KAIROS have joined the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), a global coalition of institutional investors concerned about climate change. The Daly Foundation, a Catholic charitable foundation, first joined the CDP in 2006. This year, the Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's Pension Plan, and the United Church of Canada's General Council also became signatories to the fifth annual CDP report, which was released on September 24 in New York.

Globally, CDP Signatories hold investment assets of approximately \$41 trillion (US). Every year the CDP sends a survey to the largest publicly traded companies in the world regarding the financial risks and opportunities related to climate change. In 2007, less than half of the 200 Canadian companies included in the survey responded to the questionnaire.

Canadian companies are lagging behind their international counterparts on disclosing climate change risk. The Canadian response rate (44%) was lower than almost every other jurisdiction surveyed, which included Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, Japan, the UK and the US.

KAIROS is recommending that all national churches and religious orders in Canada join the CDP. For more information on how your church or religious community can participate in the Carbon Disclosure Project, please contact Ian Thomson, Program Coordinator for Corporate Social Responsibility, KAIROS, tel. 1-877-403-8933 ext. 229, ithomson@kairoscanada.org.

For more information on the Carbon Disclosure Project, visit:
<http://www.cdproject.net>

KAIROS calls on Harper government to fully implement CSR Roundtables recommendations

We are still awaiting a government response to the National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the Canadian Extractive Sector, which were held in 2006. Throughout the roundtable process, KAIROS and our Southern partners called for new binding legislation to hold Canadian companies accountable when they are complicit in human rights violations or ecological damage abroad. The government heard similar calls from the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, the United Church of Canada, and the Most Rev. Andrew Hutchison, then Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

In May 2007, Canadian church leaders and KAIROS partners from Mexico, South Africa, India and the Philippines visited Ottawa and urged the government to adopt and fully implement the 27 recommendations from the roundtables. In establishing CSR standards for Canadian companies, our Southern partners highlighted the importance of incorporating the right of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) for communities who will be affected by extractive sector projects.

At the time of writing this update, it has been 236 days without a government response to the roundtable process.

Visit our website to read the roundtable submissions from KAIROS and Canadian churches:

<http://www.kairoscanada.org/e/corporate/roundTable.asp>

We need your support

KAIROS works closely with mining activists and mining-affected communities in the global South in struggles to defend their rights. You can help KAIROS work with these partners who are promoting just development and the stewardship of Creation. Click [here](#) to donate online now or go to: www.kairoscanada.org/e/support/donate.asp

Export Development Canada opens its doors (for a day)

On October 18, Export Development Canada (EDC) held its first ever Annual Public Meeting in Gatineau, Quebec. KAIROS, the Canadian Council for International Cooperation and other civil society groups took the opportunity to ask questions of Eric Siegel, EDC's President and CEO, regarding human rights and climate change. EDC is a crown corporation that offers financial support and services to promote exports and foreign direct investment by Canadian companies.

KAIROS was disappointed that EDC wouldn't commit to keeping Canadian public money out of mining projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo that are currently under review by a Congolese appointed commission (see following story for details). We were equally disappointed that EDC has not attempted to measure or reduce the carbon footprint of the international transactions it facilitates each year, which topped \$66 billion in 2006.

Mining contracts signed under a cloud

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), dozens of mining contracts signed during the transition from dictatorship to democracy have been reviewed over the last few months by a panel set up by the Congolese government under pressure from Congolese civil society. Several of the contracts involve Canadian registered companies. KAIROS is requesting that Canada demand the publication of the final report of the ministerial commission, and ensure that any new agreements between the Congolese authorities and mining companies (particularly Canadian companies) include a commitment to protect the rights of Congolese including their right to get a fair share of the wealth of their country. KAIROS is urging Canadians to contact Canada's new ambassador to the DRC on this matter.

For more information and to read KAIROS' urgent action alert on how to contact the Canadian ambassador in Kinshasa, visit:
<http://www.kairoscanada.org/e/urgent/uaDRC0711.asp>

To subscribe to this newsletter and for more information, please contact:
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KAIROS joins US effort to save shareholder action rights

In early October, KAIROS joined hundreds of US-based churches, religious orders and church pension funds to defend the right of investors to file shareholder proposals with US companies. The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is currently considering two proposals that would seriously curtail the ability of shareholders to file non-binding resolutions at annual shareholder meetings. For many years, KAIROS and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) in New York have used shareholder proposals as a tool to engage companies on human rights, environmental and economic justice issues.

To read the joint statement that KAIROS endorsed on behalf of its members, visit:
<http://www.saveshareholderrights.org/takeaction.cfm>