

Dear ECCR members, partners and friends

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Corporate engagement and advocacy

Shareholder resolutions on Canadian oil sands: BP and Shell

ECCR has been working with the Co-operative Group, WWF, Platform, Greenpeace and others to raise awareness of challenges facing BP from its proposed entry, and Shell from its current investments, in the Canadian oil (tar) sands sector. After a period of dialogue, it has been agreed to initiate shareholder resolutions with respect to both companies. ECCR corporate member FairPensions is co-ordinating the effort. The aim will be to file resolutions in December 2009 for inclusion on both companies' 2010 AGM agendas. Investors interested in the possibility of co-filing either or both resolutions are invited to contact [Louise Rouse](#) (tel. 020 7403 7812).

ECCR Board member ‘tackles mining giant’

ECCR Board member Fr Frank Nally challenged the environmental and human rights record of BHP Billiton at its AGM on 29 October. Alongside justice and peace activists and indigenous Wayuu people from Colombia, he called on the company to respect the human rights and livelihoods of local people in mining areas and to care for water, air and biodiversity. Full report: [Independent Catholic News](#).

The London Mining Network has published an [alternative report](#) on BHP Billiton, highlighting concerns over impacts on environment, indigenous peoples and human rights in Asia-Pacific, the Americas and South Africa. A [response from the company](#) has also been published.

ECCR’s work on migrant workers commended in House of Lords debate

On 27 October ECCR’s Patron Lord Harries of Pentregarth tabled a House of Lords debate on the Government’s assessment of the protection of vulnerable migrant workers. ECCR’s [briefing paper](#), compiled with the help of several other organisations, was praised during the debate, and its research on [Vulnerable Migrant Workers](#) was cited. During the debate, issues of slavery and forced labour were raised, and the follow day the House agreed an [amendment to the Coroners and Justice Bill](#) that will make slavery and forced labour a criminal offence. Lord Harries’s article ‘Gangmaster laws “should be extended”’ appears on [ePolitix.com](#).

The most recent issue of the [Exwin Collection](#), edited by ECCR member Ro Pengelly, focuses on vulnerable work, with contributions from the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, Oxfam GB and ECCR.

Working Group on Mining in the Philippines dialogue with mining companies continues

Online dialogue has continued between the Working Group, which includes ECCR, and mining companies, following publication earlier this year of the Group’s report [Philippines: Mining or Food?](#). Companies concerned include Intex, TVI Pacific, Xstrata/SMI, BHP Billiton, Freeport McMoRan, , Pelican Resources, Philex. See [Business & Human Rights Resource Centre](#).

ECCR and QPSW engage with supermarkets on Israeli settlement goods

ECCR and corporate member Quaker Peace & Social Witness are engaging with leading British and Irish supermarket chains on such issues as how they monitor the presence in their supply chains of goods produced in Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. ECCR has published a [briefing](#) and [findings to date](#) and encourages investors and supermarket customers to [draw companies’ attention to concerns](#). More information: [Suzanne Ismail](#) (tel. 020 7663 1055).

Shell’s Corrib gas pipeline plans deferred again on safety grounds

The Corrib gas saga, in which ECCR has at times been involved, continues. The Irish planning board has once again deferred approval of Shell’s gas onshore pipeline, citing 14 conditions casting doubt over the company’s claims that the project is safe. The same safety concerns are at the heart of local community objections to the way the project has been developed. Local campaigners are calling for a ‘complete rethink’ of the project by Shell, Statoil and the Irish government. [Read more](#).

Meanwhile, Dublin NGO Action from Ireland (Afri) has launched a [petition](#) calling for a suspension of all work pending independent investigations and are supporting the Annual Ken Saro-Wiwa Memorial Seminar, 26-29 November 2009, Kilcommon Lodge and Inver Community Centre, Erris, Co. Mayo, Ireland. Contact: tel. +353 (0)87 628 38 35.

Vedanta: Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group ‘continues to probe’

The Church Times reports that the Church of England ‘continues to probe Indian mining company’ Vedanta. [Full report](#) (subscription required). For recent news items and articles about Vedanta, see [London Mining Network](#).

Uzbek cotton and forced child labour webinar, 19 November

[As You Sow](#) and partners host a 75-minute webinar for European and Asian SRI and faith-based investors focused on steps to help eliminate Uzbekistan’s mass-mobilisation of forced child labour in cotton production. Thursday 19 November 2009, 2 pm GMT / 3 pm CET. Presenters: Philip Chamberlain, C&A; Lauren Compere, Boston Common Asset Mgmt; Patricia Jurewicz, As You Sow; followed by questions and discussion. An Uzbek cotton investor call takes place two days before, on 17 November at 4 pm GMT. Information/registration: [Dan Fibiger](#) (tel. +1 (415) 391 3212 x 45).

Bench Marks Foundation says De Beers has not benefited communities

De Beers’ diamond mining activities in Botswana have failed to generate benefits for communities, according to a [report](#) by ECCR’s South African partner the Bench Marks Foundation. The report focuses on the company’s Debswana joint venture with the Botswana government, describing it as a ‘marriage ... at the expense of communities, human rights, the environment and sustainable local economic development’.

Joint Public Issues team response to consultation on lending

The Joint Public Issues team of the Baptist Union, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church - all ECCR corporate members – has published a [response](#) to the Office of Fair Trading consultation on irresponsible lending. The central principle put forward is that all people should be treated with dignity and respect and not be compromised by the need to service debts. The response argues that lenders should not lend unless they can confirm that the borrower has a good prospect of servicing the loan and removing themselves from debt.

Trócaire launches Irish debate on private sector and development, assesses state pension plans

ECCR donor-partner Trócaire in its latest [Development Review](#) has launched an Irish national discussion on how and when the private sector can contribute to development objectives. Subjects covered include sustainable pensions, fair taxation and human rights frameworks for business.

Trócaire Private Sector Advocacy Officer and ECCR Board member Mark Cumming has written an [assessment](#) of the investment policy of the Irish State Pension Fund, drawing out issues of investor responsibility that the UK Personal Accounts Delivery Authority will also face. Quoting Mark, the Financial Times FT.com blog asks ‘[Can Irish pensioners behave responsibly?](#)’

Responsible and sustainable investment

National Ethical Investment Week organisers call for government to stimulate ethical investment

Research published by the organisers of National Ethical Investment Week (NEIW) has found that [private investors want the UK government to do more](#) to stimulate green and ethical investments. The research was unveiled at a parliamentary reception to launch NEIW, which ran from 8 – 14 November and aimed to raise awareness of the green and ethical options available to investors. NEIW is co-ordinated by UKSIF and this year featured a [guide for churches](#) produced in association with ECCR.

3iG survey of faith-consistent investment – still time to respond

ECCR partner the [International Interfaith Investment Group 3iG](#) is conducting a [global online survey](#) of faith-consistent investment. People who co-ordinate the investment decisions of their faith communities (rather than consultants or other professionals) are invited to take a few minutes to participate, and the deadline has been extended to 1 December. ECCR's faith-based investor members have already been notified of this survey, and we encourage those who have not yet participated to do so.

Events

The Future of Banking, ECCR open debate, 19 November, London

A few days remain to register for ECCR's 2009 open debate. Chair: Lord Harries of Pentregarth, former Bishop of Oxford. Speakers: Chris Hewett, Green Alliance (replacing Nick Robins of HSBC who is unable to participate); Edward Mason, Ethical Investment Advisory Group of the Church of England; Kevin Smith, Platform and BankTrack; James Vaccaro, Triodos Bank. Thursday 19 November 2009, 4.30 - 6.15 pm, Friends House, Small Meeting House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. [More details](#). Registration: [Miles Litvinoff](#) (tel. 020 8965 9682).

Pooled funds: opportunities for responsible investment, 1 December, London

This free seminar from ECCR donor-partner the EIRIS Foundation will enable charity finance directors, trustees and staff to explore opportunities for charities and foundations to invest responsibly whilst investing in pooled funds. Speakers will include the Charity Commission; Stephen Hine, EIRIS Foundation; Helen Wildsmith, CCLA; Bill Seddon, Epworth; David Docherty, Cazenove. Tuesday 1 December, 9.00 am registration for 9.30 - 12.00 pm, Wellcome Collection, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE. [More information](#). Inquiries and reservations: [Jennifer Pennington](#) (tel. 020 7840 5745).

Human rights lawsuits against companies, 3 December, London

This Business & Human Rights Resource Centre event will feature leading human rights lawyers Martyn Day (UK) and Paul Hoffman (US). Both have brought landmark lawsuits against companies. Cases to be covered include Trafigura (Côte d'Ivoire), Shell (Ken Saro-Wiwa case, Nigeria), BP (Colombia), Cape (South Africa), Unocal (Burma) and the ongoing apartheid reparations lawsuit. Short documentary film clips will also be presented. Thursday 3 December, 6.00 pm for 6.15 pm, free of charge, Friends House, Euston Road, London. [Further details](#). RSVP: [Joe Westby](#),

How will the recession impact corporate social responsibility? 8 December, London

Will a new way of doing business emerge with the 'green shoots of recovery?' Are companies investing more in CSR as they seek to demonstrate their ethical credentials - or will the recession lead to cuts in this area? JustShare debate with Professor Jeremy Moon (International Centre for CSR) and Nick Wright (UBS). Chair: Revd Paul Zaphiriou (Bishop's Adviser on CSR). Tuesday 8 December 2009, 1.05 – 2.00 pm, St Mary-le-Bow Church, Cheapside, London EC2V 6AU Entrance free, all welcome. Followed by free Fairtrade drinks. [Further details](#).

Faith and climate change

Faith leaders sign statement for Copenhagen

On 29 October the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams, Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathon Sacks, Archbishop Nichols and other faith leaders signed a statement part-drafted by Operation Noah urging political leaders to take action at Copenhagen. In the first statement of its kind, signed by leaders from

every faith community (including Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Baha'i, Jain and Zoroastrian) the signatories recognise 'unequivocally that there is a moral imperative to tackle the causes of global warming' and that 'Faith communities have a crucial role to play in pressing for changes in behaviour at every level of society and in every economic sector'. [Read more](#).

ECCR announcements

A welcome to new members

ECCR offers a warm welcome to new corporate members Co-operative Financial Services and Pax Christi.

Members' Annual Meeting, 19 November, London

A final reminder that ECCR's Members' Annual Meeting takes place on Thursday 19 November 2009 from 2.30 to 3.30 pm at Friends House, London, followed by our open debate on The Future of Banking. The meeting will receive ECCR's Annual Accounts and is an opportunity for members and donor-partners to meet ECCR's Board and Secretariat team, review work over the past year and input into future plans. We look forward to seeing many members and partners later this week.

Visits to ECCR's website on the rise

Traffic to ECCR's [website](#) continues to grow, averaging over 7,000 monthly visits since June 2009, up from a previous average of 5,000 visits per month.

With all good wishes.

The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility
PO Box 500, Oxford OX1 1ZL, UK
www.eccr.org.uk
info@eccr.org.uk
t. +44 (0)1865 245349

ECCR is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales (No. 2764183) and a Body in Association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Miles Litvinoff, Co-ordinator
miles.litvinoff@eccr.org.uk
t. +44 (0)20 8965 9682
m. +44 (0)7984 720103

ECCR's monthly e-newsletter reaches approximately 400 people in the UK, Ireland and internationally who work on, or are interested in, corporate and investor responsibility, social and economic justice, and environmental sustainability. The e-newsletter is circulated midway through every month except August. Members and partners are welcome to submit brief news items for inclusion.

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