

Dear

I am writing to alert you to my concerns about the issue of mining in the Philippines. My attention has been drawn to this by *Mining in the Philippines – Concerns and Conflicts*, the report of the joint UK and Irish fact-finding mission to the Philippines in July and August 2006, including ex-Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short MP.

In the foreword to the report, Clare Short writes: 'I have never seen anything so systematically destructive as the mining programme in the Philippines. The environmental effects are catastrophic as are the effects on people's livelihoods' (p.i).

The Catholic Bishops of the Philippines are quoted as saying that full implementation of the country's liberalised 1995 Mining Act will 'destroy both the environment and people and will lead to national unrest' (p.iii). The Bishops are working for repeal of the Act.

The report, which is available at www.columban.com and www.eccr.org.uk, points out that:

- The Philippine government 'appears willing to circumvent its own laws protecting the environment and human rights and reduce standards below acceptable international practice' in wooing foreign direct investment in mining (p.iii).
- 'The country may be left with clean-up costs that run into billions of dollars' (p.iv).
- Responsible mining, in accordance with international best practice, is 'simply not being observed' (p.1).
- Mining is 'wreaking havoc' on 'livelihoods, health and human rights of indigenous peoples and other local communities' (p.2).
- Many human rights and environmental activists are among the hundreds of victims of extrajudicial killings recorded in the country in recent years (p.2).

The report outlines considerable investment risks, including legal and political challenges, widespread civil society opposition, growing international attention to the government's very poor human rights record, and the fact that many of the mineral-rich lands lie in or close to areas where rebels and insurgents are active.

I agree with the report's recommendation (p.27) that mining companies and the investor community should exercise extreme caution in implementing and expanding mining operations in the Philippines until the environment and human rights are properly protected in that country.

[Either:]

I am asking you as my pension provider / bank / insurance company [*delete as appropriate*] to inform me if you hold any investments in any of the following mining companies and financial institutions:

[insert list]

If you do hold such investments, please urge those companies and banks in which you have shares to halt mining projects and investment in the Philippines until the environment and human rights of locally affected communities are properly protected.

[Or:]

I am writing to you as one of the mining companies / financial institutions [*delete as appropriate*] with current or potential interests in the Philippines to halt any such project in that country until the environment and human rights of locally affected communities are properly protected.

I look forward to hearing from you.