

**An Important Step Forward:
The Final Report of the National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility
and the Canadian Extractive Industry in Developing Countries**

The Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA) commends the Government of Canada for its ground-breaking consultation on *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Canadian extractive industry in developing countries*. The process, which was led by a federal government Steering Committee, is an important step forward.

The roundtables culminated with the release of a final report, authored by a multi-stakeholder Advisory Group that included representatives from industry, civil society, academia, labour and the socially responsible investment community. The report outlines a set of consensus-based recommendations for the government. If implemented, these recommendations would establish Canada as a global leader in Corporate Social Responsibility.

The CNCA is calling on the Government of Canada to:

- 1. Promptly adopt the Final Report's consensus-based recommendations.**
- 2. Immediately implement the Canadian CSR Framework that is set out in the report.**

The roundtables fulfilled a recommendation made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT) in its landmark 2005 report on Mining in Developing Countries and Corporate Social Responsibility. The report called for major policy and law reform to ensure that Canadian companies comply with international human rights and environmental standards.

Member organizations of the CNCA participated in the national roundtable process that took place from June to November, 2006. CNCA members valued this opportunity to hear from other interested members of the Canadian public, national and international experts, and representatives from communities affected by Canadian mining, oil and gas companies. Many members made written submissions that are available on the roundtable website.¹

¹ http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/current_discussions/csr-roundtables-en.asp

The centerpiece of the final report is the Canadian CSR Framework. The Framework is important because it:

- Establishes CSR standards and reporting obligations for Canadian companies;
- References international human rights standards and provides for the creation of human rights guidelines for the application of the CSR standards;
- Creates an ombudsman office to receive complaints regarding the operations of Canadian companies in the developing world and to assess corporate compliance with the standards; and
- Includes a provision for withholding government services from companies in cases of serious non-compliance.

The report's recommendations address the negative environmental and social impacts that are so often associated with Canadian extractive operations. They represent an important step towards improved CSR performance in this sector. However, the Government of Canada must continue to build on this new platform. Once established, the Canadian CSR Framework must:

- Be incorporated into binding legislation so that compliance is mandatory as recommended in the SCFAIT report;
- Integrate the internationally-recognized principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent for indigenous peoples;
- Reflect internationally-guaranteed human rights standards and the corresponding obligations of states and non-state actors to respect the human rights of individuals and communities.

Members of the Canadian Network for Corporate Accountability:

Amnesty International Canada
Africa-Canada Forum
Americas Policy Group
Asia Pacific Working Group
Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
Canadian Council for International Co-operation
Canadian Labour Congress
Entraide missionnaire
Friends of the Earth Canada
Halifax Initiative Coalition
Inter Pares
Kairos – Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
MiningWatch Canada
North South Institute
Rights & Democracy
Steelworkers Humanity Fund
United Church of Canada

Other Signatories:

Amnesty International (French Canadian Section)

No A Pascua Lama - Montreal

Projet Accompagnement Guatemala

Social Justice Committee

SUCO