



April 11, 2022

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
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Dear Prime Minister

Greetings. We pray that you and your colleagues are well and safe in these challenging times.

I am writing to encourage your Government to live out its' commitment to human rights and the environment by supporting two legislative initiatives.

For over a decade, The United Church of Canada has been aware of widespread and credible allegations that Canadian companies are linked to serious human rights abuses overseas. United Church partners in Asia, Africa, and Latin America have repeatedly called on the church to respond to the grave injustices faced in a number of contexts where Canadian corporations operate: environmental degradation, extrajudicial killings, incarceration, militarization, and intimidation of community leaders. As a member of the Canadian Network for Corporate Accountability, The United Church of Canada and its constituents have consistently asked the Canadian government to adopt measures to effectively respond to these allegations.

The Canadian government continues to rely on voluntary measures to encourage responsible business conduct despite its knowledge that Canadian companies and supply chains are contributing to human rights abuse and environmental damage abroad. Experience shows these measures are ineffective. As companies continue to profit from abuses caused in their own operations or through their supply chains, it is increasingly clear that many will only change their behaviour if required to do so by law.

This is why I am writing you today, on behalf of The United Church of Canada with its more than 85 global partners networked through 130 countries worldwide, to ask your Government to



support the following two bills and follow the example of Norway, Germany and France which have already adopted similar legislation:

- Bill C262 “An Act respecting the corporate responsibility to prevent, address and remedy adverse impacts on human rights tabled by MP Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby) would require companies to conduct human rights and environmental due diligence by reviewing all their business activities, identify actual and potential risks to people and the planet, take steps to mitigate the risks, and ensure remedy for those harmed. Moreover, if passed, and a company causes harm or fails to do its human rights and environmental due diligence, those affected would have the statutory right to bring a civil lawsuit against that company in a Canadian court to seek justice and remedy.
- Bill C263 tabled by MP Heather McPherson (Edmonton – Strathcona), “An Act to establish the Office of the Commissioner for Responsible Business Conduct Abroad and to make consequential amendments to other Acts” would invest the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE) with the powers needed to do its job such as the power to order the production of documents and compel witness testimony under oath. Without these powers, the CORE continues to be an ineffective office.

The United Church of Canada along with a [broad sector of civil society organizations](#), unions, investors and Canadian and international subject-matter experts including over [150 organizations](#) that work directly with people impacted by the activities of Canadian companies in 32 countries invite you to seize this opportunity. By supporting this legislation, your Government can make legally enforceable an expectation that has existed for a long time: that corporations must respect human rights and the environment abroad. The time for delay, voluntary and half measures is long past. Partners of The United Church of Canada: women, indigenous people, land defenders, church leaders have lost their lives, suffered grave violence and their environment been irreparably harmed by the actions of Canadian companies overseas.

We look forward to hearing how your government will support these bills and make Canada a leader in corporate accountability.

Regards,



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