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Contents:

****In the News****

- European Parliament calls on Commission to strengthen Corporate Social Responsibility policy
- International conference on good governance and social and environmental responsibility

****New Papers****

- State Responsibilities to Regulate Corporate Activities under UN Core Treaties. By John Ruggie
- Briefing on the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility - ISO 26000
- Corporate Social Responsibility of Multinational Corporations. By CMI
- Report on corporate social responsibility: a new partnership. European Parliament
- Law and the Relation Between Violence and Ressource Exploitation. By Robert Dufresne
- Women's General & Reproductive Health in Global Supply Chains. A BSR Report

****In the News****

- European Parliament calls on Commission to strengthen Corporate Social Responsibility policy

The European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ) has welcomed today's approval by the European Parliament of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) resolution urging the European Commission to extend legal obligations to some key aspects of corporate accountability. By voting for the resolution, MEPs have called for directors to personally take on legal responsibility for the behaviour of their companies; for European corporations to be liable in the EU for damage they cause abroad; and for lobbyists to be obliged to disclose their clients and budgets.

Read the complete press release

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2007/ep_calls_to_strengthen_csr.pdf

Read the ECCJ's press briefing on the issue

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2007/csr_press_briefing.pdf

- International conference on good governance and social and environmental responsibility

The Government of Norway will be hosting an international conference on good governance and social and environmental responsibility in Oslo, 28 - 30 March 2007.

Representatives from government, international institutions, the private sector, trade unions, civil society and various research institutions are expected to attend. The conference is being jointly organised by business and industry partners, including the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the UN Global Compact, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

For more information and to register online, please visit the conference website:

www.csr-oslo.org

New Papers

-- State Responsibilities to Regulate Corporate Activities under UN Core Treaties. By John Ruggie

The review summarises treaty-specific reports and makes preliminary observations as to how human rights institutions may be applied to strengthen human rights protection and promotion in the context of corporate activity.

The report argues that UN human rights treaties require states to play a key role in effectively regulating and adjudicating corporate activities with regard to human rights. The UN human rights treaties clearly bind the states to prevent and punish corporate abuse. Failure to do so will be considered a violation of treaty obligations. The paper concludes that more guidance from the treaty bodies on the scope and content of state obligations to regulate corporate activity. More clarity could help both rights-holders and business enterprises.

Download the study (PDF/112KB):

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2007/state_responsibilities_under_un_core_treaties.pdf

-- Briefing on the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility - ISO 26000

The briefing aims to inform NGOs and other civil society organisations about the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility. This working group is currently developing an international standard that will give guidance to organisations on social responsibility: the ISO 26000 standard. The working group initiated its work in 2004 and is expected to deliver the guidance standard in the second half of 2009. The authors of this briefing argue that it is still worthwhile for NGOs and other civil society organisations to start participating in the development of the standard. At this stage of the process, there are many possibilities to influence the drafting of the standard significantly.

If you are interested in the process, don't hesitate to contact

Bart Slob: b.slob@somo.nl or

Gerard Oonk: g.oonk@indianet.nl

Download the briefing (PDF/144 KB):

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2007/iso_26000_briefing.pdf

-- Corporate Social Responsibility of Multinational Corporations. By CMI

The question of corporate responsibility in poor and undemocratic countries, has been addressed by a Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) strategic program. This brief relates the major results of the program, which has run from 2004 to 2006.

There are three different perspectives on business ethics:

- The normative perspective asks what corporations ought to do, what responsibilities do corporations have and to whom.
- The instrumental perspective studies what responsibilities are profitable and in the interest of firms to pursue, and how firms can be given incentives to fulfill their other responsibilities.
- The descriptive perspective asks what firms actually do in the area of business ethics.

Download the briefing (PDF; 336 KB):

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2007/csr_of_multis.pdf

-- Report on corporate social responsibility: a new partnership. European Parliament

The Report on CSR was done by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament. It contains a motion for an EP-Resolution with an explanatory statement and an opinion of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy as well as an opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality.

Download the report (PDF/152 KB):

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2006/ep_report_on_csr0612.pdf

Read the reaction of the European Coalition of Corporate Justice (PDF/12 KB):

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2007/eccj_position_on_csr_report.pdf

-- Law and the Relation Between Violence and Ressource Exploitation. By Robert Dufresne

This file contains the conclusions and the table of content of a dissertation of Robert Dufresne. Individuals who are interested in the whole text can send an email to the author. The email address is noted in the file. The work consists of a historical and a contemporary part and analyses the problem that all the patterns of trade-cum-violence examined deal with the protection of wealth from violence on one hand whilst using violence to secure wealth on the other.

Download the conclusions:

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2006/robert_dufresne.pdf

-- Women's General & Reproductive Health in Global Supply Chains. A BSR Report

This project identified and addressed critical reproductive health needs of women working in global supply chains. It complements work Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) first began in 2001-2002 with an assessment of the extent of brand and/or supplier programs that addressed women's health in the factory setting and the development of a Guide for Brands, which equipped retail companies, suppliers and local civil society partners with a better understanding of the reproductive health needs of supply chain workers.

Download the study (PDF/ 3,25 MB):

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2006/womens_health_in_global_supply_chains.pdf

www.corporate-accountability.org aims to facilitate the flow of information among NGOs and social movements who believe their governments, private sector and civil society need to make greater efforts to ensure the accountability of business and industry, especially Transnational Corporations, to society. It contains information about ongoing civil society campaigns on corporate accountability and about NGOs and trade unions who are active in this field. It provides comprehensive material on codes of conduct, multi-stakeholder initiatives and intergovernmental processes.

Finally, this site makes available documents and publications on corporate accountability and links to relevant research institutes and databases.

Feedback and suggestions are highly appreciated!

Corporate-Accountability-News mailing list

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<http://lists.trilos.net/mailman/listinfo/corporate-accountability-news>