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****In the News****

- Forthcoming Conference: Business, Social Policy and Corporate Political Influence in Developing Countries

Large corporations and business associations exert strong and growing influence over social development and government policy in developing countries.

How are changes in state-business-society relations affecting development strategies, and social and labour market policies?

- Do new forms of business participation and partnership advance social development outcomes and improve the effectiveness of governance institutions?
- What institutional, political and economic conditions encourage organized business interests to support "progressive" social, labour market and industrial policies that favour inclusive and rights-based development?

Date: 12 - 13 Nov 2007

Location: Palais des Nations - Geneva, Switzerland

This event is open to the public.

Visit the website:

<http://www.unrisd.org/mbr-conference>

-- Seminar: "How can reporting become a relevant tool for Corporate Accountability at European level?"

The Forum Citoyen pour la RSE, on behalf of European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ) organises a seminar entitled "How can reporting become a relevant tool for Corporate Accountability at European level?" on Friday, November 16th in Paris.

This seminar aims to bringing together a small group of experts in the field of social and environmental reporting (lawyers, consultants, NGO, union representatives, academics) to put together feasible and concrete recommendations that could be applied to improve this aspect of corporate accountability at EU level. See attached program and information.

If you have significant expertise in this area and are interested in attending the event, please get in touch with Violaine Plagnol (v.plagnol@ccfd.asso.fr) as soon as possible to express your interest.

The results of the seminar will be circulated to all ECCJ members for comment and discussion, and will be feeding into a large document that will be produced collecting the recommendations of the four ECCJ seminars. This report will then be presented in a conference at the European Parliament in May 2008 to which ECCJ members will be invited.

New Links

-- Global Compact Critics

Global Compact Critics is an informal network of organizations and people with concerns about the UN Global Compact. On this blog we gather and share information about the Global Compact, partnerships between the United Nations and companies, and corporate accountability. It is not a database, but rather a collection of opinions, news items and background information. SOMO will keep this blog updated. Visit the website:

<http://www.globalcompactcritics.net>

New Papers

-- Model National Contact Point. By OECD Watch

"Model National Contact Point" makes recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of the OECD Guidelines, one of the few corporate accountability instruments currently available. Almost none of the countries surveyed had properly functioning bodies to deal with complaints about violations of the OECD Guidelines. The Model NCP contains proposals and recommendations to improve and harmonise the functioning of the National Contact Points. Proposals range from principles such as the independence of the NCP and equal treatment of parties to detailed recommendations towards better handling of complaints.

Download the report (PDF/3,2 MB):

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

--2007 Annual Survey of violations of trade union rights

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) is less than a year old as we go to press. This is the first Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights to be published by our new organisation. The Survey itself is well established of course, and the format it follows remains the same. Sadly, the story it tells is also very similar, and depicts the enormity of the challenges before us.

The 2007 edition of the Survey, covering 138 countries, shows an alarming rise in the number of people killed as a result of their trade union activities, from 115 in 2005 to 144 in 2006.

Visit the website:

<http://survey07.ituc-csi.org/getcontinent.php?IDContinent=0&IDLang=EN>

--Oil and Mining in Violent Places. Why voluntary codes for companies don't guarantee human rights. A Report by Global Witness

Even if voluntary frameworks could be adapted to provide the necessary degree of clarity and specificity, the problem remains that companies which do not want to be bound by a voluntary framework will simply opt not to join. This problem will grow as extractive companies from China, India, Russia and other countries play an increasing role in resource extraction, because companies from these countries have typically not been exposed to the kind of pressure from activist shareholders, non-governmental organisations and class-action plaintiffs that have made Western-based multinationals more sensitive to their reputations on human rights than they used to be. As a result, there is a widening void between the need for clear and enforceable standards against corporate complicity in human rights abuses and the medley of non-binding principles and guidelines that are being offered as a solution to the problem.

Download the report (PDF/2,26MB):

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

-- Act Now! A Campaigner's Guide to the Companies Act

The "Act Now" guide was designed by the Corporate Responsibility Coalition and the Trade Justice Movement to provide advice and ideas on how activists and campaigners can use the Companies Act to help improve the social and environmental performance of companies. The guide provides:

- an understanding of the relevant new provisions in the 2006 Companies Act
- some tools and techniques on how to use the Act in campaigns
- signposts to further information.

Download the guide (PDF/1,63 MB):

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

-- The state of responsible business: Global corporate response to environmental, social and governance challenges. A report by Ethical Investment Research Services

This report provides an overview of the extent to which companies are addressing their environmental, social and governance impacts. The issues covered are corporate governance, equal opportunities, human rights, supply chain labour standards, environmental responsibility and community involvement. Other topics examined include climate change, HIV/AIDS and responsible business approaches in emerging markets.

Download the report (PDF/504 KB):

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

-- CSR Frame of Reference 2007. By the MVO-Platform

This Frame of Reference for corporate social responsibility (CSR) reflects the vision of CSR for the Dutch CSR Platform (MVO Platform), a coalition of Dutch civil society organisations. We give a brief overview

of standards and operating principles.

The CSR Frame of Reference has been drafted for use by business, the government and non-profit organisations alike. From the CSR Platform's perspective, corporate social responsibility is not a 'grab-bag' of options to pick and choose from at will. More importantly, we believe that CSR should be rooted in national legislation, internationally adopted standards and widely accepted principles of good governance and responsible corporate behaviour.

Download the reference (PDF/1 MB)

http://www.corporate-accountability.org/eng/documents/2007/csr_frame_of_reference_2007.pdf

-- Measuring real value: a guide to social return on investment. By nef

Social Return on Investment (SROI) shows how social and environmental outcomes translate into tangible monetary value, helping organisations and investors of all kinds to see a fuller picture of the benefits that flow from their investment of time, money and other resources. This investment can then be seen in terms of the 'return' or the value created for individuals, communities, society or the environment. The guide of the new economics foundation (nef) has two purposes, to increase understanding about SROI generally and to train practitioners on how to prepare an SROI analysis from start to finish.

Download the guide (PDF/1,4 MB)

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

Corporate-Accountability-News@lists.trilos.net

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

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