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ANNOUNCEMENT

Corporate Accountability: Tools to Promote Responsible Business Conduct

A Capacity Building Program for NGOs and Trade Unions

A partnership between OECD Watch and the Diplomacy Training Program
4-6 November, 2009, Bangkok, Thailand

OECD Watch and The Diplomacy Training Program have partnered to deliver the forthcoming regional capacity building program on **Corporate Accountability: Tools to Promote Responsible Business Conduct**. The program has been developed to assist civil society and community leaders to actively engage in the social, environmental and human rights challenges posed by the influence of corporations, particularly multi-national enterprises in the region.

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and other internationally agreed standards, principles and guidelines (such as the ILO Conventions and Declarations, The International Bill of Human Rights and the Global Compact) provide a comprehensive framework for addressing the role and responsibility of the private sector in sustainable development and in upholding human rights.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) including trade unions play a key role in addressing societal concerns about the behaviour of corporations throughout their global supply and production chains. To be effective it is important to understand the tools available to promote responsible business conduct and strategies to effectively engage with key decision makers in both business and government.

Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) play an increasingly important role in today's globalised world. MNEs have the capacity to have direct impact on communities, workers, indigenous peoples and the environment. They can facilitate sustainable development and contribute to poverty eradication. However, this impact is not always positive, particularly in emerging economies and conflict zones.

Governance and regulatory gaps exist, and must be addressed by home and host governments, multinational enterprises and multilateral organisations. This requires strengthening existing standards, principles and guidelines for multinational enterprises, developing new regulatory measures, facilitating multi-stakeholder initiatives and conflict resolution and redress mechanisms.

The seminar will be held as a side event to the OECD and UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) "*Regional Conference on Corporate Responsibility: Why Responsible Business Conduct Matters*", and the Trade and Investment Week (2-6 November). A small number of participants will be able to attend select sessions at these regional events, providing an opportunity to ensure a Southern CSO perspective in international policy debate on corporate account





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The program aims to enhance the capacity of civil society organisations to understand and influence the social, environmental and human rights impacts of global business in the interest of sustainable development through the use of international instruments and tools, particularly the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

The program will include:

- ◆ Introduction to existing and emerging corporate responsibility standards and tools (OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, ILO mechanisms, Global Compact etc)
- ◆ Introduction to the broader context of trade, investment, corporate accountability and sustainable development
- ◆ Update on the key policy debates at an international level (UN SRSG mandate, OECD Guidelines review, Lecce Framework, ISO 26.000, corporate governance and the financial crisis)
- ◆ Training on use of the OECD Guidelines and other grievance mechanisms
- ◆ Practical skills and exercises for addressing corporate social and environmental responsibilities, including research skills, lobbying, advocacy, mediation and engagement with business.
- ◆ Lessons from different strategies used by NGOs in the region with an emphasis on migrant workers, indigenous peoples and supply chains.

PARTICIPANTS

The program is designed for 40-50 civil society representatives from Asia/Pacific countries who work for, and with, non-government, labour and community organisations. It is particularly relevant to OECD Watch members from the region, NGOs and trade unions working on specific cases and considering using the OECD Guidelines, and other NGOs with a focus on corporate accountability. Applications from women and Indigenous Peoples' are encouraged. The training suits both experienced and less experienced corporate responsibility practitioners, and is conducted in English.

PROGRAM ORGANISERS

OECD Watch is an international network of 88 civil society organisations from across the world promoting corporate accountability and responsibility. OECD Watch members are active participants in policy dialogue at the OECD Investment Committee, the ILO and the UN. The Netherlands-based Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO) hosts the secretariat of OECD Watch.

The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) is an independent non-governmental organisation (NGO) providing practical training in human rights and people's diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. The DTP was founded in 1989 by Jose Ramos-Horta, the 1996 Nobel Peace Laureate and President of Timor-Leste. It is affiliated with the Faculty of Law at UNSW in Sydney, Australia. For further information on the program contact Virginia Sandjojo on virginia@oecdwatch.org or download documents from the OECD Watch and DTP website.

**** This seminar is part of OECD Watch's broader capacity building program of NGOs and unions. These initiatives have the financial assistance of: The Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Dutch Ministries for Foreign and Economic Affairs, Oxfam Novib, Dutch Trade Union Federation FNV, Brot for die Welt, Misereor, and Human Rights at Work Foundation.*

