

Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability

Africa-Canada Forum

Americas Policy Group

Amnesty International Canada

Asia Pacific Working Group

Canada Tibet Committee

Canadian Council for International Co-operation

Canadian Labour Congress

CAW-Canada

Committee for Human Rights in Latin America

Development and Peace

Entraide Missionnaire

Friends of the Earth (Canada)

GlobalAware Canada

Halifax Initiative Coalition

Inter Pares

KAIROS - Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

Mennonite Central Committee Canada

MiningWatch Canada

North-South Institute

Publish What You Pay Canada

Social Justice Committee

Steelworkers Humanity Fund

United Church of Canada

PRESS RELEASE

Bill C-300: Narrow Defeat despite Widespread Support for Mining Accountability and Human Rights

Ottawa, October 28th, 2010 - The Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA) deeply regrets the defeat of Private Member's Bill C-300, The Responsible Mining Bill, at third and final reading in the House of Commons. The Bill lost by a narrow margin of 140 to 134.

The CNCA is a network of 23 national civil society organizations concerned with the impact of Canadian extractive industries operating abroad.

"This is a lost opportunity. Heavy lobbying and some serious misinformation put out by the mining industry chipped away at support for what was a modest but important step toward corporate accountability," said Catherine Coumans of Mining Watch Canada.

The Bill received a groundswell of support in Canada and around the world, demonstrating a strong desire for measures to improve corporate accountability. Claire Doran, director of education at Development and Peace, said, "Half a million Canadians have written to the Prime Minister calling for measures to ensure that Canadian companies are held accountable in Canada for their overseas operations."

"Passing C-300 would have boosted Canada's national reputation and demonstrated that we take human rights seriously," said Alex Neve, Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada.

Hundreds of testimonies and letters from non-government organizations and affected communities throughout the world have revealed major human rights violations committed by Canadian extractive companies operating overseas. Just last week, 40 organizations in Latin America sent a joint letter of support for the legislation, urging its passage.

Canada's main mining union also deplored the Bill's defeat. Ken Neumann, United Steelworkers National Director for Canada, said "Companies shouldn't operate abroad with impunity. This Bill would have brought formal checks and balances to mining companies' treatment of workers, communities, and the environment."

The 2006 National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility in the Extractive Industries, a landmark process in which the mining industry and civil society organizations participated, addressed these issues and came to unprecedented consensus and recommendations.

According to Gerry Barr, President-CEO of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, "The Bill's defeat is a disappointment, but given the very close outcome of the vote, we've made significant gain. We will continue to work hard to push for measures for greater corporate accountability and human rights."

-30-

CONTACT:

Marie-Dominik Langlois
CNCA Coordinator
Tel.: (613) 731-6315 ext. 25
Cell: (514) 756.6966
coordinator@cnca-rcrce.ca

Elizabeth Berton-Hunter
Amnesty International Canada
Media Relations
(416) 363-9933 ext. 332