



Press Release

Davos, 25 January 2012

Corporations on the leash – rally in Davos

50 "invisible" dogs strayed through the streets of Davos today, drawing much attention. The 'Corporate Justice' alliance rounded up its street action with a rally, calling to put corporations on a short leash - like the invisible dogs. The heads of Greenpeace International and Amnesty International supported the alliances's core demand: Corporations should be required by law to comply with human rights and environmental standards.

Pictures from the demonstration and rally can be viewed [here](#)

Speaking at the rally in Davos, Kumi Naidoo, head of Greenpeace International, pointed to the numerous cases of severe environmental pollution by multinational corporations – including Shell in Nigeria, Trafigura in Côte d'Ivoire (with its operational headquarters in Switzerland) and Danzer (also headquartered in Switzerland) in Democratic Republic of the Congo. The people suffering the direct consequences of such environmental pollution find it very difficult to gain a legal hearing and hence hold the corporate headquarters accountable.

Amnesty International chief Salil Shetty recalled that the UN Human Rights Council recently approved guidelines on business and human rights. They clearly establish that it is not just States but also companies that must respect economic, social and cultural human rights. The governments of all countries, and those of industrialised countries in particular, must act now to enforce this.

Peter Niggli, Director of Alliance Sud, the Swiss Alliance of Development Organisations, called on the Swiss authorities to pass the respective laws. Switzerland has so far relied on companies to regulate themselves on a voluntary basis. But several cases of human rights violations and environmental pollution clearly show that this is not sufficient. Switzerland bears special responsibility, being host to a huge number of multinational firms often operating in fields that are highly sensitive in human rights and environmental terms - in the commodities sector, for example.

'Corporate Justice' is an alliance of over 50 Swiss development and human rights organisations, environmental and women's associations, trade unions and shareholder associations. It has launched a petition calling on the Federal Council and the Parliament for clear rules to compel firms headquartered in Switzerland to observe human rights and environmental standards worldwide. Victims of respective violations should be able to file suits against the responsible parent companies in Switzerland.

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Pictures and video clips from the 'Corporations on the leash' demonstration and from the rally can be viewed [here](#)