

The Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Securities
Suite SG 60
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

I write in support of the Corporate Code of Conduct Bill 2000 aiming as it does to regulate the activities of Australian companies overseas in the areas of human rights, environment, labour and occupational health and safety.

The Bill seeks to apply basic international standards. This is not asking more than what the companies are expected to observe when operating in Australia.

In the past year two occurrences in particular, that at the Esmerelda Baia Mare Gold Mine in Romania and at Ok Tedi in Papua New Guinea amply show the need for such regulation.

However, I question the legislation being applicable only to companies of 100 employees or more. I would like to see it applicable to smaller companies as well.

Australia also has a responsibility to ensure that Australian companies operate in a manner that is consistent with international human rights. The reputation of Australian companies and of Australia is also enhanced by such good practices.

The Bill would be a means to promote international standards in regard to human rights and good environmental practice.

Gabriella Gresz rsm
Projects Co-ordinator
Mercy Foundation
PO Box 1027
Waterloo DC NSW 2017

Ph (02) 9699 8726

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