

Church Leaders Call for Responsible Investment

The Africa Roundtable Meeting on the 14th and 15th February 2008 resolved to call for an investment code of conduct governing the business operations of multinational corporations on the African continent.

The Church Leaders' Call will be promoted amongst civil society networks, including trade unions, communities and churches. The code will call upon governments and multinational corporations in Africa to abide by the following principles:

1. Support for a sustainable system of production, equitable distribution of economic benefit and pro-poor local economic development policies.
2. Stewardship and protection of the environment for present and future generations.
3. Respect for the land, people, and local resources where business is conducted.
4. Pollution free and environmentally responsible production.
5. Payment of reasonable tax by all corporations and payment of royalties for the use of land and resources by mining companies.
6. Responsible conduct by government officials who should not sit on the boards of corporations where benefits and future jobs accrue to them because of their official position.
7. Government investment policies should demonstrate the prioritisation of people and the environment.
8. Affirmation of the central role of women in economic life and encouragement of gender sensitivity at a leadership level.
9. Independent monitoring by local non-governmental and community organisations of the conduct by corporations and their suppliers.
10. Affirmation of indigenous peoples' right to full participation in the business decisions that pertain to their ancestral lands and their way of life.
11. Commitment to the human rights policies outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including respect for the dignity of every person, workers' rights to organise and bargain collectively, payment of a living wage and support for all core labour rights such as no employment of child labour.
12. Commitment by corporations to responsible reporting and providing free access to the public to information on all company activities.
13. Provision of free access to health care for all workers and family members and benefits that accrue to communities, including anti-retrovirals for the treatment of HIV/AIDS.
14. Demonstration of corporate governance policies that balance the interests of managers, employees, shareholders with those of communities and are based on ethical values such as inclusivity, integrity, honesty, justice and transparency.

15. Prior consent by communities for any business operation on their land and adequate compensation based on mineral value by the corporation to the community for the use of the land and resources.
16. No forced seizure of land and forced removals of communities by governments and corporations.

Endorsed by:

The participants of the Africa Roundtable meeting, February 2008.