

The Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development
The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Labour

Dear Ministers,

We are writing to express our support for the recently tabled private members Bills C-262 and C-263.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist-Mennonite churches, engaged in emergency response, community development, and peacebuilding initiatives in more than fifty countries. Over the years, we have heard repeated stories from grassroots partners in places such as Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo about how Canadian mining companies and their supply chains, are destroying agricultural land, contaminating water supplies, threatening Indigenous traditions, increasing threats faced by human rights defenders, and contributing to conflict and violence, particularly against women.

There are few avenues of support to address these concerns in Canada. These two recently released private members bills will help to resolve some of these issues.

Bill C-262, *An Act respecting the corporate responsibility to prevent, address and remedy adverse impacts on human rights occurring in relation to business activities conducted abroad*, would require companies to review all their business activities, identify actual and potential risks to people and the environment, take steps to mitigate the risks, and ensure remedy for those harmed through enacting human rights and environmental due diligence. This legislation would require companies to report on risks and also actively work to prevent risks to people and the environment coming out of their operations.

Bill C-263, *An Act to establish the Office of the Commissioner for Responsible Business Conduct Abroad and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*, would invest the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE) with the powers needed to do its job. Effectively, when the government created CORE, it was in name only. Without powers to order the production of documents and compel witness testimony under oath, the CORE is an ineffective office. Bill C-263 would change that.

We note that there are two other private member's bills (C-243 and S-211) around corporate accountability currently in the House. We do not believe that those bills will establish the goals outlined in this letter and encourage careful consideration when voting on those bills.

Together with members of the Canadian government, MCC desires all people to have the ability to live healthy, safe, and dignified lives, in Canada and around the world. These two bills are clear ways that Canada can take a step towards those goals. We hope you will join us in active cross-party support of this legislation. Together, we

can make a difference for people and for the planet that we all live on by enacting corporate accountability in Canada.

Sincerely,



Rick Cober Bauman

CC:

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