

Human Rights Due Diligence: Breaking the pattern of business involvement in human rights violations

In a new [report](#), CIDSE, the international alliance of Catholic development organisations, charts out pathways for legislators to ensure corporations respect human rights.

CIDSE Secretary General **Bernd Nilles** said, “*We have seen too many cases over recent years where business activities have led to violations of labour rights or rights to land, livelihood, health and a clean environment. Citizens have been shocked by the extreme negligence of certain companies. We are calling upon governments to protect communities from such abuses.*”

The European Union is currently considering a legal requirement for corporations to publish reports on the human rights and environmental impacts of their operations. Further draft legislation is due before the end of the year, which would compel European companies to carry out thorough supply chain checks to make sure they are not using or trading natural resources that are funding conflicts.

And a number of governments are discussing national plans for implementation of the 2011 United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, with the United Kingdom having released its plan earlier this month.

The CIDSE report [Human Rights Due Diligence - Policy measures for effective implementation](#) documents numerous situations on the ground, such as the [Glencore Xstrata Tampakan mine in the Philippines](#), that demonstrate the need for States to ensure that corporations effectively assess the human rights risks of their operations, prevent and mitigate adverse impacts, and account for how they address these impacts.

“*With recent research, we now know that there are many existing examples of due diligence mechanisms in legal measures around the world.*” said **Denise Auclair**, Senior Policy Advisor. “*Governments should use and build upon these to develop robust due diligence regimes, that will put a stop to violations of human rights by businesses.*”

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Notes to the editors

- **CIDSE** is an international alliance of Catholic development agencies. Its members share a common strategy in their efforts to eradicate poverty and establish global justice. www.cidse.org
- **CIDSE members:** Broederlijk Delen (Belgium), CAFOD (England and Wales), CCFD - Terre Solidaire (France), Center of Concern (USA), Cordaid (the Netherlands), Development & Peace (Canada), Entraide et Fraternité (Belgium), eRko (Slovakia), Fastenopfer (Switzerland), FEC (Portugal), FOCSIV (Italy), Fondation Bridderlech Deelen (Luxembourg), KOO (Austria), Manos Unidas (Spain), MISEREOR (Germany), SCIAF (Scotland), Trócaire (Ireland)
- [Human Rights Due Diligence - Policy measures for effective implementation](#), September 2013. Available in English, French and Spanish

This CIDSE briefing explains what human rights due diligence is and, referring to examples of existing practice in due diligence, how it should be implemented by businesses and the essential role of States in this regard. Taking examples of concrete situations on the ground, it argues that if effectively implemented, human rights due diligence can help to prevent and address human rights abuses.