



ANNUAL BRIEFING

Corporate Legal Accountability

November 2013

Executive Summary

While many multinational companies operate easily across national borders, many people who suffer human rights abuses at the hands of companies struggle to access judicial remedies, allowing those companies to operate with impunity.

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre's Corporate Legal Accountability Annual Briefing provides an overview of corporate legal accountability for human rights, summarising trends and developments in this field since our [first Annual Briefing in June 2012](#).

The goal of the Annual Briefing is to help a wide audience understand what has been happening in different parts of the world. *First*, it examines **global trends** in corporate legal accountability such as barriers to accessing judicial remedies; extraterritorial jurisdiction, i.e., whether courts in companies' home countries can regulate the companies' impacts abroad; threats faced by human rights advocates; and the role of lawyers in business and human rights. *Second*, the briefing provides an **overview of regional developments** in corporate legal accountability. *Third*, it reviews the current status of **Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA)** litigation following the US Supreme Court's decision in *Kiobel v. Shell*. *Fourth*, the briefing **looks ahead at emerging issues** in corporate legal accountability. *Fifth*, it concludes with **recommendations** for companies, governments, lawyers advising companies and victims' advocates.

Victims of business-related human rights abuses continue to face many barriers when seeking judicial remedies for abuses such as torture & ill-treatment, killings and rape & sexual abuse. These barriers include denial of access to judicial remedy due to ethnic, racial or gender discrimination; difficulty of "piercing the corporate veil" to hold parent companies accountable for subsidiaries' actions; inadequate resources for prosecutors and investigators; and the lack in many countries of an option to pursue claims as a large group (collective or class actions). The issue of extraterritorial jurisdiction also limits remedies that victims of abuse may seek against companies in their home countries.

The briefing reviews the US Supreme Court's decision in *Kiobel v. Shell*. This decision dealt a major blow to ATCA – a statute that has been a vital tool for human rights advocates for three decades. The decision significantly narrows human rights cases that can be brought under ATCA based on abuses outside the United States. The briefing reviews steps by human rights advocates to seek other venues, post-*Kiobel*, for legal remedy such as courts in other countries where companies are headquartered, e.g., continental Europe, as well as US state courts. They are also turning increasingly to the courts in countries in the global South where many abuses occur, but these courts often are terribly under-resourced and/or lack independence, so are unable to provide adequate remedies for abuses such as torture, dispossession from lands, and pollution causing deadly illness.

Human rights defenders often face threats aimed at silencing their work, such as counter-lawsuits by companies aimed at derailing human rights defenders' work; threats of death, arrest or physical harm; and technological threats to privacy and confidentiality.

Increasingly bar associations, law societies and individual law firms are starting to address how lawyers can and should incorporate human rights in their advice to business clients. The American Bar Association has endorsed the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The Law Society of England and Wales has established a practitioners' advisory group to inform the Law Society's work with regard to business and human rights, with an aim to providing advice to the legal profession. [Guidance is already available from Advocates for International Development \(A4ID\)](#), and Shift has organised "[Workshops for Lawyers on the UN Guiding Principles](#)".

The Annual Briefing also reviews legal developments in particular cases and countries, with links to our case profile and/or further materials about each lawsuit. This overview of regional developments covers lawsuits regarding alleged abuses in the following countries:

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------|----------|
| Africa | Côte d'Ivoire | Dem. Rep. of Congo | Gabon | Kenya |
| | Nigeria | South Africa | Tanzania | |
| Americas | Argentina | Brazil | Chile | Colombia |
| | Ecuador | Guatemala | USA | |
| Asia/Pacific | Bangladesh | Cambodia | China | India |
| | Indonesia | Papua New Guinea | Philippines | |
| Europe | France | Russia | | |
| Middle East & North Africa | Iraq | Israel/Palestine | Libya | Qatar |
| | Syria | | | |

The companies involved in these lawsuits include:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| adidas | Agua Mineral Chusmiza | Alstom | Amesys |
| Anglo American | Anvil Mining | Apple | Arab Bank |
| Barrick Gold | BASF | Blackwater (now Academi) | Boliden |
| BP | CACI | Chevron | Chiquita |
| Correctional Services Corp. | Daimler | Danzer | Dow/Union Carbide |
| Drummond | Eramet/COMILOG | ExxonMobil | Ford |
| Global Horizons | Google | Heping Technology | Henry's Turkey |
| HudBay Minerals | IBM | Juren Education Technology | KBR |
| Kenya Pipeline Co. | Kizone (Indonesia) | Lonmin | Luliang Chemicals |
| Microsoft | Nestlé | Paltalk | Qosmos |
| Rio Tinto | Riwal | Shell | Signal International |
| SNCF | Tanzania Breweries | T&L Sugars/American Sugar | Thomson Safaris |
| Trafigura | Vedanta | Veolia | Vinci |

Looking ahead, we expect to see further efforts to use criminal law (domestic and international) to hold businesses accountable for human rights abuses. In addition, human rights NGOs and legal groups are paying increasing attention to the role of law and lawyers in tax avoidance, and its impact on human rights.

Advocates working to hold companies accountable for human rights abuses, and victims seeking effective remedies, continue to face tremendous challenges. While some progress has been made in some countries, much remains to be done. The lack of overall progress supports the arguments of many that governments and companies applying the UN Guiding Principles have not prioritised the access to remedy pillar of the “Protect, Respect and Remedy” framework that forms the basis of the Guiding Principles. For the rights of victims of abuses involving companies to be realised, and for all companies to face a level playing field on human rights issues, governments, lawyers, and companies must do more to ensure that these victims have access to enforceable remedies.

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1. Introduction

Multinational companies, the largest of which have revenues exceeding the gross domestic products of countries such as Sweden, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, operate easily across national borders. By contrast, people who suffer abuses at the hands of companies frequently struggle to access judicial remedies, allowing companies involved in abuses to operate with impunity. John Ruggie [stated in September 2013](#), at the launch of the UK Government’s “Action Plan” for implementing the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights: “The UN Guiding Principles...stress the importance of states taking appropriate steps to reduce legal, practical and other relevant barriers that could lead to denial of access to remedy...The international community no longer regards sovereignty as a legitimate shield behind which egregious human rights violations can take place with impunity; surely the same must be true of the corporate form.”

This briefing provides an overview of corporate legal accountability for human rights, summarising trends and developments in this field since our [first Annual Briefing in June 2012](#). It provides information about human rights lawsuits against companies for lawyers and non-lawyers – victims, advocates, NGOs, business people and others. The goal is to help a wide audience understand what has been happening in different parts of the world. The briefing flags some major issues and cases. It is not a comprehensive overview. It includes a wide range of cases, but in many of them, victims have been unable to obtain enforceable judicial remedies for abuses they suffered. Moreover, these cases represent only a tiny fraction of the wide range of abuses in which companies are implicated, many of which are available on [our website](#).

Further information about specific cases is available on Business & Human Rights Resource Centre’s [Corporate Legal Accountability Portal](#) – an online hub that provides accessible, up-to-date concise case profiles on over 90 lawsuits in all parts of the world (see section 8 for further details). Business & Human Rights Resource Centre provides information on companies’ human rights impacts, both positive and negative, in an objective and fair manner. The website also provides tools & guidance for the implementation of companies’ human rights responsibilities, including a portal on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Further information about the Resource Centre is in section 7 below.

2. Global trends

2.1. Access to judicial remedies

(a) Barriers to accessing judicial remedy – a continuing challenge

Victims of business-related human rights abuses continue to face many barriers when seeking judicial remedies. In an [October 2013 report from Forum-Asia](#), civil society groups working in ASEAN countries highlighted the many challenges victims in this region face when seeking redress for abuses: “The rights of these victims are often not recognized or awarded against the interests of powerful companies. It is especially difficult for individuals and small community groups to seek redress when their claims...are not formally recognized by the government, and subsequently denied access to official complaint mechanisms.” The report explained that another reason governments fail to provide remedies against business actors is that often no legal framework exists that could hold a company accountable for human rights abuses. [Our 2012 briefing](#) identified other barriers faced by many human rights advocates such as the difficulty of “piercing the corporate veil” to hold parent companies accountable for subsidiaries’ conduct; inadequate resources for prosecutors and investigators; and the lack in many countries of an option to pursue claims as a large group (collective or class actions). We continue to hear from lawyers and victims that these barriers are major obstacles. One victim of serious abuses in Kilwa, Democratic Republic of Congo, who sought to hold Anvil Mining accountable for its alleged role in violence there, [cited obstacles](#) including pressure by the government to drop the suit and judicial bias. In a [commentary for our Corporate Legal Accountability Portal](#), Lewis Gordon of the Environmental Defender Law Center identified the following barriers: “close ties between corporations and host governments; corrupt judiciaries; the limited availability of lawyers willing and able to bring these cases; the nearly unlimited financial resources of many corporate defendants; and the risk of institutional racism and retaliation, especially as to indigenous victims”.

In its March 2013 [report to the UN Human Rights Council](#), the UN Working Group on business and human rights noted some of these barriers, particularly:

- the cost of seeking judicial remedy;
- the lack of resources and legal aid available to victims;
- the complexity of corporate structures;
- difficulty in accessing information;
- jurisdictional challenges; and
- difficulties in enforcing judgments.

The Working Group recommended that States address the barriers to accessing remedy, including by “protecting victims and human rights defenders from harassment, persecution and reprisals for seeking access to remedies” for corporate human rights abuses. The Working Group is undertaking a project on access to remedy to build capacity in this area.

At the UN’s first annual Forum on Business and Human Rights (December 2012), one session ([full video here](#)) focussed on this issue of access to judicial remedy. The panellists noted the substantial barriers victims face. Several emphasised that the right to legal remedy is itself a fundamental human right. Juana Kweitel, of the Brazilian NGO Conectas, emphasised: “[Few issues are as central to the language of human rights as the idea of the right to an effective judicial remedy. The right to an effective judicial remedy forms the central core of the international law of human rights.](#)” Some barriers outlined in this session included:

- The impact of businesses employing litigation strategies geared toward closing the door to judicial remedies. For example, in an “[Issues Brief](#)” written by former UN Special Representative John Ruggie in September 2012, he noted that Shell’s litigation strategy in the *Kiobel v. Shell* case appeared to seek “not only to dismiss the claims against it, but also to negate the statutory basis

making it possible to use U.S. courts as a forum to adjudicate civil liability for gross human rights violations committed abroad”.

- The logistical and financial difficulties of cross-border litigation, including when seeking to hold a parent company legally accountable for its foreign subsidiaries’ actions. It can be challenging to obtain visas for witnesses to travel to testify. [In the lawsuit in US court against CACI, brought by Iraqi former prisoners at Abu Ghraib, procedural delays in the trial complicated visa applications.](#) Despite eventually obtaining valid visas, the plaintiffs were not allowed to fly to the United States and were unable to testify.
- Limitations on available remedies through bilateral investment treaties and agreements negotiated by companies with host governments.

Further information:

- [Access to Judicial Remedy – Ensuring Redress For Victims of Corporate Related Human Rights Abuses](#), a joint project of International Corporate Accountability Roundtable, European Coalition for Corporate Justice and Corporate Responsibility Coalition [full report will be released in late 2013]

- [PDF] [The ICJ Declaration on Access to Justice and Right to a Remedy in International Human Rights Systems](#), International Commission of Jurists, 12 Dec 2012

(b) Extraterritorial jurisdiction – challenges and opportunities

Experts have identified the lack of available remedies against companies in the courts of their home countries for their impacts abroad as a major concern. For example, former UN Special Representative John Ruggie, in the [opening address of the first UN Forum on Business and Human Rights](#) (Dec. 2012), said the issue “requires more immediate international attention. National courts appear not to share a consistent understanding regarding the applicability to companies of international standards prohibiting gross human rights abuses.” EarthRights International [recently noted](#): “As human rights abuses and abusers are transnational, so too must be the ability of victims to access mechanisms for justice, particularly where the national courts of a human rights-violating regime do not present an adequate forum for demanding justice.”

- *Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA) & US courts*: In April 2013, the US Supreme Court issued its decision in the *Kiobel v. Shell* lawsuit – the first time the Supreme Court addressed ATCA in a human rights lawsuit against a corporation. The Court affirmed the lower court’s dismissal of the case and restricted the application of ATCA in cases of abuse outside the United States. Since then, other US courts have heard corporate ATCA cases that were on hold pending the *Kiobel* decision (see section 5 below for more). The dismissal of this case has spawned a great deal of discussion regarding what options remain available to victims of human rights abuses. For example, [David Bilchitz and Ngwako Raboshakga of the South African Institute for Advanced Constitutional, Public, Human Rights and International Law noted](#): “[T]he [*Kiobel*] decision indicates the need for governments across the globe to develop new laws allowing action to be taken against home corporations (and individuals) that become complicit in human rights violations abroad...The time is ripe for South Africa to develop a legal framework for holding its companies accountable for human rights violations committed abroad.”
- *Canada*: Attempts to hold Canadian companies accountable in Canadian court for extraterritorial human rights impacts had generally been unsuccessful, until in July 2013 an Ontario court agreed that a case against HudBay Minerals by a group of Guatemalans could go to trial (see section 3.2(f) below). Some commentators have [noted](#) that this decision could be a turning point in corporate legal accountability for human rights in [Canadian courts](#).
- *Europe*: To date, courts in continental European countries have refused to hear most business and human rights cases that have been brought before them. Courts in some of these countries, including France, Germany, Netherlands and Switzerland, are currently being tested as venues for such lawsuits against companies or company executives. For example, a French decision recently held that French courts have jurisdiction to hear a lawsuit against COMILOG regarding harms that occurred in Gabon (see section 3.1(c) for details). Most of these cases have been criminal rather than civil claims (see

lawsuits against Danzer, Vinci, Riwal, Amesys and Qosmos in section 3 below for details). However these cases still face an uphill struggle in many European countries; European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights has said that [political interests often determine whether laws are applied extraterritorially](#).

Further information:

- [The Global Lawyer: Kiobel's Continental Cousins](#), Michael Goldhaber, *Litigation Daily* (USA), 15 May 2013
- [Enhancing Corporate Accountability for Human Rights Violations: Is Extraterritoriality the Magic Potion?](#), Nadia Bernaz, Middlesex University School of Law, in *Journal of Business Ethics*, 8 Nov 2012

(c) Threats faced by human rights advocates

Human rights defenders are often threatened with lawsuits known as “SLAPP” actions (strategic lawsuit against public participation). SLAPP lawsuits are [“retaliatory lawsuits intended to silence, intimidate, or punish those who have used public forums”](#) to advocate for issues such as public safety. SLAPP lawsuits often take the form of libel or defamation claims. They [move the public debate away from human rights issues originally raised, and toward a litigious battle between two parties with vastly different financial resources](#).

In many regions, human rights lawyers, like other human rights defenders, face threats of death, arrest or physical harm when they speak out against abuses by companies. For example, a plaintiff against Anvil Mining who alleged complicity in abuses in Democratic Republic of Congo [reported that several advocates, plaintiffs and witnesses were threatened](#) with violence and death during proceedings in DRC. Several of the lawsuits we profile seek remedy for deaths or threats against labour leaders (see lawsuits against Ford Motor Argentina, Drummond, Nestlé in section 3 below).

In other cases, human rights advocates have faced technological threats to their privacy and to the confidentiality of their work. In the lawsuit against Chevron regarding oil pollution in Ecuador, [the lawyers working on behalf of the indigenous Ecuadorian plaintiffs have had their email records in the United States subpoenaed](#) from their internet service providers. NGOs such as [EarthRights International](#) have criticised the court decision to uphold the subpoena, saying it is an example of Chevron’s attempts to silence its critics. In another instance, a [lawyer working on the case against the Belo Monte dam in Brazil](#) alleged that the Belo Monte consortium had hired an individual to infiltrate an organization representing those affected by the dam and provided the individual with technology to spy on their activities.

Further information:

- [Environmental Defender Law Center](#)
- [Front Line Defenders](#)
- [Alliance for Lawyers at Risk](#)

2.2. The role of lawyers in business & human rights

Increasingly bar associations, law societies and individual law firms are starting to address how lawyers can promote business and human rights in their advice to corporate clients.

The American Bar Association (ABA) has endorsed the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. During the UN’s first annual Forum on Business and Human Rights, the ABA hosted a side event entitled “The Role of the Legal Profession in the Implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights”. At this event, the Resource Centre’s former director, Christopher Avery, presented questions and challenges to lawyers in attendance. Noting that broad endorsement of the Guiding Principles provides lawyers with an ideal chance to raise human rights issues with business clients, he asked: “What are you doing as lawyers to help bring the perpetrators to justice – or to provide financial or *pro bono* support to those seeking to bring the perpetrators to justice?...What are you doing as a

lawyer and as an individual who can influence law reform to help ensure that the 3rd pillar of the UN Guiding Principles [on ensuring access to remedy for victims of abuse involving companies] is implemented in your country and internationally?”

In August 2013, the Law Society of England and Wales established a practitioners’ advisory group to inform the Law Society’s work with regard to business and human rights, with an aim to providing advice to the legal profession. [Guidance is already available from Advocates for International Development \(A4ID\)](#), and Shift has organised [“Workshops for Lawyers on the UN Guiding Principles”](#).

Further information:

- [The UN Guiding Principles: Practical Implications for Business Lawyers](#), John F. Sherman, III, Shift, in *In-House Defense Quarterly* (USA), Winter 2013
- [The Global Lawyer: How to Handle Your Evil Clients](#), Michael D. Goldhaber, *Litigation Daily* (USA) 28 Jul 2013
- [Magic circle firms draw up first human rights policies](#), Rebecca Lowe, International Bar Association, 14 Jan 2013
- [Further articles on our site regarding law firms and UN Guiding Principles](#)

3. Regional developments

This section addresses legal developments in particular cases and countries, with links to our case profile and/or further materials about each lawsuit. The cases appear under the country/region where the alleged abuse occurred. Some have been litigated in the host country; others in the company’s home country or another country where the company operates.

3.1. Africa

(a) Côte d’Ivoire: In November 2012 [the Dutch public prosecutor’s office and Trafigura agreed to settle](#) a lawsuit charging Trafigura with the illegal export of toxic waste to Côte d’Ivoire. Trafigura agreed to pay €367,000 to the Dutch Government in disgorged earnings and fines.

(b) Democratic Republic of Congo:

- In April 2013 a group of NGOs filed a complaint with the state prosecutor’s office in Tübingen, Germany, alleging [a senior manager of Danzer Group](#), a timber company, provided logistical and financial help to Congolese police during an attack on a village. During the attack, the police raped and injured villagers and destroyed homes and other property.
- In November 2012 the Canadian Supreme Court announced that it would not hear the plaintiffs’ appeal of the dismissal of [the lawsuit against Anvil Mining](#) alleging the company’s involvement in human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The lower court had held that it lacked jurisdiction to hear the case.

(c) Gabon: In 1991, the Gabonese mining firm COMILOG laid off 955 workers without notice or compensation and said they would receive severance in instalments. Many claim they never received any severance. The French firm ERAMET subsequently became a majority owner of COMILOG. [In 2007 over 800 former COMILOG workers brought a complaint before a French employment tribunal](#) alleging unfair dismissal and requesting €65 million in compensation. In June 2013 the Paris Court of Appeal ruled that French courts have jurisdiction to hear the case. NGOs such as Sherpa see this decision as “emblematic” of the issue of corporate liability for business’ impacts abroad, and as potentially a “step toward the recognition of legal accountability of parent companies for the activities of their subsidiaries” (our unofficial translation; Sherpa’s original statement in French available [here](#)).

(d) Kenya: [In May 2012, more than 300 individuals brought a lawsuit against Kenya Pipeline Company, the City Council of Nairobi and the Kenyan Government.](#) The plaintiffs are victims of a September 2011 fire in

the Mukuru-Sinai slum in Nairobi caused by a Kenya Pipeline Company explosion and spill. The fire killed about 120 people and injured hundreds.

(e) Nigeria:

- In December 2012 the court of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) [issued a judgment in a lawsuit by Socio-Economic Rights & Accountability Project \(SERAP\)](#) against the Nigerian Government and oil companies. The court had previously dismissed the oil companies from the case, but it ruled that the Nigerian Government had failed to protect the people of the Niger Delta from the harmful effects of oil pollution on health and livelihoods. It ruled that the government must hold oil companies to account for the pollution they cause. [In August 2013 SERAP warned the Nigerian Government](#) that it might be at risk of sanctions from ECOWAS for failure to implement the court's judgment.
- In a [lawsuit in the Netherlands by a group of Nigerian farmers](#) against Shell, the plaintiffs alleged that oil pollution from Shell's Nigerian subsidiary had destroyed their livelihoods. The court ruled in January 2013 that one of the farmers should be compensated, but it dismissed the other claims finding that the oil spills were caused by third party sabotage. [In another lawsuit in UK court by different plaintiffs](#), Shell is beginning settlement negotiations with 15,000 Nigerians claiming compensation for oil spills in 2008.
- The US Supreme Court issued a decision in April 2013 on the Alien Tort lawsuit against Shell brought by the Kiobel family and others. For information about this case see section 5 below.

(f) South Africa:

- [Thirty South African gold mining companies are facing a class action lawsuit](#) filed in South African court in December 2012. The plaintiffs are over 17,000 ex-gold miners suffering from the lung disease silicosis; they allege that the defendant companies knowingly failed to adequately protect the workers from harmful silica dust. [Mining industry experts have said](#) that if the plaintiffs are successful in this lawsuit, it could harm the financial viability of South Africa's gold mining industry and cause major job losses for gold miners. Anglo American has also faced two other recent silicosis lawsuits brought by former South African gold miners. The first is pending in South African court, and the second was filed in UK High Court. In July 2013 [the UK High Court dismissed the lawsuit](#) against Anglo American South Africa, finding that it did not have jurisdiction. In August the South African lawyers applied to the High Court of Johannesburg to have the pending cases consolidated.
- In August 2013, [a US appeals court ruled that a lawsuit against Daimler, Ford and IBM regarding alleged complicity in crimes committed by the South African Government](#) during *apartheid* should be returned to the lower court. The appeals court recommended dismissing the case, citing the US Supreme Court's limitation on extraterritorial application of the Alien Tort Claims Act in [Kiobel v. Shell](#).
- [During a strike in August 2012 at Lonmin's Marikana mine in South Africa, police opened fire on the strikers, killing 44 and injuring 75](#). The South African Government established a [judicial commission of inquiry](#) to examine this event. This commission is charged with investigating the conduct of the government, Lonmin, the unions and others involved.

(g) Tanzania:

- [In July 2013 a group of 12 Tanzanians filed a lawsuit against African Barrick Gold](#) in UK High Court, alleging that the company was complicit in killings and injuries of villagers by police at the North Mara Mine in Tanzania.
- [In May 2013 a Tanzanian court dismissed a lawsuit against Tanzania Breweries and Tanzania Conservation Ltd](#) (a local arm of Thomson Safaris, a US-based tourism company) brought on behalf of Maasai pastoralists, alleging they were forcefully evicted from their land. The court dismissed the case because of a technical error in the plaintiffs' paperwork. The plaintiffs filed new proceedings in June 2013, joining the local villages as plaintiffs.

3.2. Americas

(a) Argentina:

- [In May 2013 three former Ford Motor Argentina executives were charged with crimes against humanity in Argentina](#) for alleged complicity in the kidnapping and torture of union workers after the 1976 military coup.
- [The US Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal in a lawsuit against Daimler](#) alleging its Argentinian subsidiary collaborated with the military dictatorship during the 1980s in kidnapping, torturing and killing former employees of the subsidiary. The Court will examine whether a US court can exercise jurisdiction over a foreign corporation “based solely on the fact that...[a] subsidiary performs services on behalf of” the corporation in the United States.
- In 2004 residents of one of the worst-polluted towns along the [Matanza-Riachuelo river sued 44 businesses operating along the river, the Government of Argentina and the City of Buenos Aires](#). The plaintiffs claimed that extensive pollution had damaged their health. In 2008 the Argentinian Supreme Court ruled in favour of the plaintiffs against the federal and provincial governments and the city. In February 2013 Greenpeace [reported](#) that, despite some clean-up efforts, pollution continues to be a major problem in the Matanza-Riachuelo river.

(b) Brazil:

- In August 2012 [the Brazilian Supreme Court overturned a lower court’s decision to halt construction of the Belo Monte Dam on the Xingu River, in the state of Para](#). The president of the Supreme Court ruled that the lower court’s decision conflicted with an earlier Supreme Court ruling. The dam is projected to be the third-largest in the world, and those opposed to it argue that it will displace thousands of indigenous people and severely damage the environment. The lower court had found that the local indigenous people had not been adequately consulted. The Supreme Court’s decision was seen by [some NGOs as evidence that the Brazilian Government, which favours the Belo Monte construction, put pressure on the court to overturn the suspension](#).
- [Shell and BASF announced in March 2013](#) that they had reached a final settlement with plaintiffs in a lawsuit alleging that a pesticide plant owned first by Shell, then by BASF, caused land and groundwater contamination resulting in severe health problems for people working at and living near the plant.
- [In February 2013 a Brazilian judge dropped criminal charges against Chevron](#) over a 2011 offshore oil spill. The civil lawsuit is still pending and is Brazil’s largest-ever environmental suit.

(c) Chile:

- [In September 2013 a group of Chileans filed a lawsuit in Swedish court against the Swedish mining company Boliden](#) seeking compensation for health problems allegedly caused by toxic waste the company dumped in northern Chile.
- The indigenous Aymaran and Atacama communities of Chusmiza and Usmagama [sued Agua Mineral Chusmiza in Chile, challenging the company’s right to bottle and sell water from their ancestral lands](#). The communities alleged that the company had illegally deprived them of land and water. In November 2009, the Supreme Court confirmed that Chilean law recognises the communities’ ancestral water rights, relying on ILO Convention 169 (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention) as well as domestic law, and granted the plaintiffs 90% of the water output.

(d) Colombia:

- [In March 2012 a European NGO and a Colombian trade union filed a criminal complaint against Nestlé and its senior management with a public prosecutor in Switzerland](#). The complaint alleged that Nestlé failed to take precautionary measures to prevent the murder of a Colombian trade unionist, and was thus complicit in the murder. In May 2013 the Swiss prosecutor’s office dismissed the complaint, finding that the statute of limitations had expired. The NGO said the proceedings showed that the Swiss judiciary was [“unwilling to pursue substantiated allegations against corporations.”](#)

- [In February 2013 a Colombian court sentenced a former contractor for Drummond Coal](#) to 38 years in prison for organising the killing of two labour leaders in 2001. The judge ordered prosecutors to investigate whether Drummond's president and other employees had a role in the killings. In July 2013 a US court dismissed a lawsuit against Drummond by families of slain Colombian labour leaders, ruling it could not hear the case following the *Kiobel v. Shell* decision.
- In April 2013, Chiquita sued the US Securities and Exchange Commission to prevent disclosure of documents relating to payments to a Colombian paramilitary group between 1997 and 2004. [Chiquita is defending lawsuits](#) brought in US federal court by families of people slain by Colombian paramilitaries who allege that Chiquita was complicit in these deaths because of payments it made to these groups.

(e) Ecuador:

- [Lawsuit against Chevron/Texaco regarding oil pollution in Ecuador](#)
 - *Efforts to enforce Ecuadorian judgment:* The Ecuadorian plaintiffs filed enforcement actions against Chevron in Argentina, Brazil and Canada in an attempt to collect the \$19 billion Ecuadorian judgment handed down against Chevron in 2011. Courts in [Canada](#) and [Argentina](#) dismissed the enforcement actions in May and June 2013, respectively. The Canadian judge ruled that Canadian courts were not the correct forum for enforcement of the Ecuadorian judgment. The Argentinian court dismissed the enforcement action because Chevron Argentina is a separate legal entity from Chevron and was not a party to the Ecuadorian legal proceedings. In July 2013 [\\$96 million of Chevron's assets in Ecuador were frozen by a local court](#).
 - *Chevron's lawsuit in USA alleging fraud:* Chevron has sued some of the Ecuadorian plaintiffs and their lawyers, alleging the Ecuadorian judgment was obtained through fraud. Lawyers for the Ecuadorian plaintiffs claim that the presiding US judge is biased but have been unable to have him removed. In April 2013, [the plaintiffs' environmental consulting firm said](#) its evidence in the case against Chevron was "tainted". The plaintiffs claimed that Chevron pressured the consulting firm to change its position in exchange for Chevron dismissing a separate lawsuit against the firm. [In July-August 2013, US federal courts upheld subpoenas served by Chevron](#) on Microsoft, Google and Yahoo! demanding private user information about environmental advocates, journalists, lawyers and others. Chevron sought these subpoenas as part of its fraud lawsuit.
- In February 2013, [a US federal judge dismissed a case](#) against DynCorp, finding that the plaintiffs, Ecuadorian farmers, could not prove that DynCorp's aerial spraying caused their health problems and destruction of crops and livestock.

(f) Guatemala: In February 2013 [HudBay withdrew its opposition](#) to the jurisdiction of Canadian courts to hear lawsuits alleging that it was complicit in rapes, beatings and killing of Mayan villagers living near its mining project in Guatemala. In July 2013 the Canadian court rejected the company's motions to dismiss the lawsuits and ruled that the cases may proceed to trial.

(g) USA:

- [A group of Indian guest workers filed a lawsuit in USA against Signal International](#) in May 2013, alleging that the company had financially exploited them and forced them to live in squalid conditions after bringing them to work in the United States under false pretenses.
- [A jury in Iowa awarded 32 mentally disabled turkey plant workers \\$240 million for years of abuse suffered at the hands of Henry's Turkey Service.](#) Lawyers for the workers said they had been "virtually enslaved" by their employer. This award was the largest verdict in the history of the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, which brought the lawsuit on behalf of the workers.
- In September 2012 [a US federal appeals court upheld an earlier dismissal of the village of Kivalina's lawsuit](#) against 19 oil, gas and energy companies, alleging that their contribution to global warming has led to the destruction of the Alaskan coastal village. The lawsuit had been dismissed because the court held that the plaintiffs did not have standing to bring the case, and that the claims raised political

questions that could and should not be decided by a court. The Supreme Court declined to hear the plaintiffs' appeal of the dismissal.

- In litigation stemming from the 2010 [Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico](#), the parties have reached some out-of-court settlements. In November 2012 BP agreed to pay \$4.5 billion in criminal fines and payments to wildlife and science organizations, and pleaded guilty to criminal charges. In January 2013 the US Government reached a \$1.4 billion settlement with Transocean; the company pleaded guilty to violations of the Clean Water Act. After an unexpected rise in claims by those alleging they were harmed by the spill in early 2013, BP sued in US federal court to block some payments, arguing that many were fraudulent. In August 2013, following an investigation into BP's concerns about potential fraudulent claims, the court refused to block payments from the settlement programme.
- After the US Supreme Court ruled in June 2011 that a [national lawsuit against Walmart alleging gender discrimination](#) brought on behalf of US female employees of the company could not proceed as a class action, the plaintiffs refiled their claim as a smaller class action, only on behalf of female workers in California. In August 2013, the federal court ruled that the new lawsuit could also not proceed as a class action.
- In 1997 [a group of foreign asylum seekers detained in the United States sued Esmor Correctional Services](#) (now known as Correctional Services Corporation, part of Geo Group), which operated the detention facility. The plaintiffs alleged the Esmor guards tortured and beat them. According to the plaintiffs' lawyers, this was the first case to apply international human rights law to a US corporation for events on US soil. In 2007, a jury found for the plaintiffs on claims that the company had been negligent in hiring, training and supervision of its guards, but against the plaintiffs on their international law claims.
- In 2010, [a US federal grand jury indicted four employees of Global Horizons](#), a US-based labour recruiting company, and two Thailand-based recruiters on charges of forced labour. The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has filed two related civil lawsuits against Global Horizons and the farms where the Thai migrants worked.
- [Two Pennsylvania state judges were convicted in 2009 for taking payments from owners of a private detention facility, PA Child Care](#), in exchange for sentencing juveniles to this facility. Families of children sent to this facility filed a lawsuit against PA Child Care and its owners in 2009.

3.3. Asia/Pacific

(a) Bangladesh: Following the Rana Plaza factory building collapse in April 2013, which killed over 1100 workers, apparel retailers sourcing from Bangladesh have come under close scrutiny. However, no suppliers or retailers have yet been held legally accountable for their role in this tragedy. [Some lawyers have noted](#) that it might be difficult, but not impossible, to hold Western retailers legally accountable. [Some US-headquartered retailers have cited the risk of being sued](#) under an international plan to improve safety conditions at Bangladeshi garment factories as a reason why they will not join the plan.

(b) Cambodia: [In March 2013 a group of Cambodian villagers filed a lawsuit against Tate & Lyle and T&L Sugars Limited](#) (a subsidiary of American Sugar Refining) in English court. The plaintiffs allege that Tate & Lyle purchased raw sugar from two companies (Koh Kong Plantation and Koh Kong Sugar Industry) that grew the sugar on land from which they were violently and illegally evicted in 2006.

(c) China:

- In 2011 Friends of Nature and the Chongqing Green Volunteer Association filed a public interest [lawsuit against Heping Technology and Luliang Chemicals over allegations that the companies dumped 5000 tonnes of cadmium waste in Luliang county](#). The lawsuit was filed in Qujing City Intermediate People's Court. The case is proceeding after the defendant companies rejected a settlement proposed by the plaintiffs.

- In July 2012, [a woman filed a lawsuit in Haidian district court against a Beijing-based company, Juren Education Technology Co., alleging the company told her that her job application was rejected because the position was for “men only”](#). This lawsuit is one of the first alleging gender discrimination under the Employment Promotion Law since it went into to effect in 2008.

(d) India:

- [In April 2013 the Supreme Court of India](#) ruled that a ban on mining in the Niyamgiri Hills would be upheld and that rights of the local tribes must be taken into consideration in any further decisions on the Vedanta mining project in Orissa, India. Twelve tribal village councils were invited by the court to consider Vedanta’s mining proposal, and all twelve voted against the proposal.
- [In June 2013 a US court dismissed a lawsuit brought by survivors of the 1984 Bhopal disaster against Union Carbide](#) (part of Dow) seeking compensation for soil and groundwater contamination that they claim resulted from the chemical leak. The court found that the parent company was not legally responsible for Union Carbide India’s failure to contain toxic waste. In July 2013 Amnesty International called on Union Carbide to respond to an outstanding summons by an Indian court to answer charges related to the disaster.

(e) Indonesia:

- [In April 2013, adidas agreed to pay severance to PT Kizone workers in Indonesia; the factory had shut down its operations in April 2011](#). The trustees of the University of Wisconsin had sued adidas in July 2012 in US court, claiming that, by failing to pay the workers’ severance, adidas had breached labour rights provisions in the contract licensing adidas to produce goods with the university’s logo. Other universities had also pressured adidas to provide legally-mandated benefits to former Kizone workers.
- The [lawsuit against ExxonMobil claiming the company was complicit in human rights abuses committed by security forces guarding a gas facility in Aceh, Indonesia](#), is still pending in US federal court. The court will likely soon hear challenges to its jurisdiction based on the *Kiobel* decision.

(f) Papua New Guinea:

- Following its ruling in *Kiobel*, the US Supreme Court vacated a previous ruling in [a lawsuit against Rio Tinto](#) finding that genocide and war crimes claims relating to the civil conflict in Bougainville could proceed, and ordered the lower court to reconsider the case in light of the *Kiobel* decision. The appeals court then dismissed the case, finding that under *Kiobel* it did not have jurisdiction.
- [In March 2013 MiningWatch Canada wrote to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) to alert her to concerns regarding a non-judicial grievance mechanism established at Barrick Gold’s Porgera Joint Venture in Papua New Guinea. Security guards at Porgera had raped a number of local women, and Barrick/Porgera established a non-judicial grievance process as a remedy. MiningWatch Canada’s concerns centre on the fact that the remedy package for victims requires them to sign away their right to legal recourse for the rapes. Barrick Gold also wrote to the UN High Commissioner in response, in [March](#), [April](#) and [July](#). The High Commissioner [issued a response](#) in August 2013; MiningWatch wrote a further [rejoinder](#), and [EarthRights International also wrote a rejoinder to the High Commissioner requesting further clarifications](#).

(g) Philippines: The [constitutionality of a ban by Davao City, for health reasons, on the aerial spraying of pesticides on banana plantations](#) was challenged in court by banana companies. The local communities from Davao City intervened in the case. The lawsuit is pending before the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

3.4. Europe & Central Asia

(a) France:

- [In August 2013 the Paris prosecutor’s office announced it had launched a preliminary investigation](#) into the US National Security Agency’s Prism surveillance programme. The prosecutor launched the

investigation following complaints by International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), Ligue des droits de l'Homme and others, alleging that the programme illegally accessed private data of French citizens. These complaints named AOL, Apple, Google, Paltalk, Microsoft and Yahoo! as potential accomplices in the surveillance programme.

- [Holocaust survivors filed three lawsuits](#) – two in US courts, one in France – against Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Français (SNCF) over its role in transporting civilians to Nazi death camps. The US cases were dismissed in 2004 and 2010; as a state-owned entity, SNCF was able to claim immunity under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. In 2007 the French High Administrative Court ruled that the case was beyond its jurisdiction.

(b) Russia: In June 2013 [a group of NGOs filed a complaint against Vinci Concessions Russie](#) before a French prosecutor. In 2009 a subsidiary of Vinci Concessions Russie had been awarded a public contract for the construction of a highway between Moscow and St. Petersburg. The complaint alleges that the contract was obtained through corruption and that the highway damaged the environment. Activists protesting this highway have allegedly been intimidated and subject to physical violence.

3.5 Middle East & North Africa

(a) Iraq:

- In August 2013, [a US federal court dismissed Alien Tort Claims Act claims against KBR](#) in a lawsuit alleging KBR's involvement in trafficking individuals to work at a US military base in Iraq. However, the ruling held that claims under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act may proceed. The trial is scheduled for April 2014.
- In March 2013, [a US federal court granted CACI's motion to dismiss claims that CACI interrogators conspired with soldiers to torture and mistreat detainees](#) at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. After the plaintiffs amended and refiled their complaint, in June 2013 the court found that it lacked jurisdiction to hear the case under the *Kiobel* decision. In a separate lawsuit against L-3 (formerly known as Titan), the victims reached a confidential settlement with the company in October 2012.
- In June 2012, [the US Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal by five guards who worked under contract for Blackwater \(now known as Academi\)](#) of an appeals court decision in a criminal case against them over shooting deaths in Baghdad.

(b) Israel/Palestine:

- In 2007, [Association France Palestine Solidarité and the Palestinian Liberation Organization sued Alstom and Veolia in France](#). The plaintiffs alleged that the companies' involvement in a consortium that contracted with the Israeli Government for a rail project in Jerusalem violated international law. In March 2013, an appeals court affirmed a lower court's earlier dismissal. The court ruled that the international law cited by the plaintiffs could not be used against companies.
- In May 2013, [the Dutch Public Prosecutor dismissed a case against Lima Holding, Riwal's parent company, for involvement in Israeli war crimes](#). The complaint, filed on behalf of the Palestinian NGO Al-Haq, alleged that the company committed war crimes and crimes against humanity by contributing to Israeli construction in the West Bank. The [prosecutor declined to move forward](#) because he found that Riwal's participation in the construction was limited, and that the company had terminated its activities in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- In August 2013, [a US federal court dismissed a lawsuit against Arab Bank](#) alleging that the bank was facilitating terrorist activity by transferring funds to Hamas and to families of suicide bombers. The plaintiffs were not US citizens; the court ruled that it did not have jurisdiction over the actions outside the US, citing *Kiobel v. Shell*. A second lawsuit with similar allegations is pending in US court; the plaintiffs in this case are US citizens.

(c) Libya: In January 2013, the Paris Court of Appeal issued a decision allowing [the judicial investigation into Amesys \(part of Groupe Bull\) to proceed, over alleged complicity with surveillance and torture by the Gaddafi government](#).

(d) Qatar: [In June 2013, a Qatari court sentenced five people to jail terms for negligence in a fire at a Doha shopping mall in May 2012 that resulted in 19 deaths.](#)

(e) Syria: [In June 2012, FIDH and Ligue des droits de l'Homme filed a criminal complaint before a Paris court](#), urging it to investigate the involvement of French companies in supplying surveillance equipment to the Government of Syria. The complaint named Qosmos, alleging that it is complicit in Syrian Government abuses including torture.

4. Alien Tort Claims Act (USA)

The US Supreme Court issued its decision in the *Kiobel v. Shell* lawsuit regarding the Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA) in April 2013. The [Supreme Court's decision](#) affirmed a lower court's dismissal of the case and restricted the application of ATCA in cases involving allegations of abuse outside the United States. See our special page on this case, "[Kiobel case: US Supreme Court Review of Alien Tort Claims Act](#)", for news items, commentary and analysis from NGOs, legal experts, business groups and others.

The *Kiobel* lawsuit alleged that Shell was complicit in torture, extrajudicial killings and other abuses of Ogoni people in the Niger Delta. The Court held that there is a presumption against extraterritorial application of US law and that the plaintiffs had not overcome this presumption. This decision significantly narrows the range of human rights cases that can be brought under ATCA in US courts based on alleged abuses outside the United States. It requires a closer connection to the United States than many US courts applying ATCA had previously required.

One opinion concurring with the judgment, in which four of the nine justices joined, argued that the majority's interpretation of ATCA is too narrow. It argued that ATCA cases should be permitted when "the defendant's conduct substantially and adversely affects an important American national interest, and that includes a distinct interest in preventing the United States from becoming a safe harbor...for a torturer or other common enemy of mankind." However, this opinion is not part of the majority opinion that is now binding on lower courts.

After the *Kiobel* decision was issued, [a number of pending ATCA cases began to move forward in US federal courts](#). On the basis of the decision's narrowing of extraterritorial jurisdiction, the trend has been toward dismissing the pending ATCA lawsuits. The following cases in US courts have been dismissed:

- [Lawsuits against Drummond Coal alleging complicity in killings of Colombian labour leaders](#)
- [Lawsuit against Rio Tinto alleging complicity in war crimes and crimes against humanity during secessionist conflict on Bougainville, Papua New Guinea](#)

It remains to be seen how *Kiobel* will be applied to remaining ATCA cases which include the [apartheid reparations lawsuits](#), [lawsuits against Chiquita alleging complicity in paramilitary violence in Colombia](#), and a [lawsuit against ExxonMobil regarding violence in Aceh, Indonesia](#).

Further information:

- [PDF] [Out of Bounds – Accountability for Corporate Human Rights Abuse After *Kiobel*](#), EarthRights International, 1 October 2013

5. Looking ahead

5.1. Issues

(a) Criminal law & corporate legal accountability: We have seen increasing efforts to use criminal law (both domestic and international) to hold businesses legally accountable for human rights abuses. For example, in the last year, several criminal cases have been filed or investigations opened involving companies and human rights, including the lawsuits against Danzer for activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Qosmos for activities in Syria and Amesys for activities in Libya (see descriptions of lawsuits in section 3). We expect human rights advocates to be increasingly looking toward criminal law as an avenue to hold companies to account.

Further information:

- [Business and International Crimes](#), FAFO, 2009
- [Developments in International Criminal Law and the Case of Business Involvement in International Crimes](#), Joanna Kyriakakis, Monash University Faculty of Law in *International Review of the Red Cross*, Autumn 2012
- [International Corporate Liability in Conflict Zones](#), American Bar Association and Conseil National des Barreaux (France), conference held in Mar 2013, with several presentations focussing on applicability of criminal law

(b) Tax avoidance and transnational corporations – can they be held legally accountable?: Local, national and international human rights groups are increasingly paying attention to the negative impact of corporate tax avoidance on human rights. Legal groups, NGOs, academics and others are now considering the role of lawyers in tax avoidance and human rights. The International Bar Association Human Rights Institute’s [Task Force on Illicit Financial Flows, Poverty and Human Rights](#) published a [report on the issue](#) in October 2013. This report noted that “to address the negative impacts of tax abuses on poverty and human rights, the most effective remedies remain in the realm of domestic tax authorities – particularly those in the most powerful developed countries whose enforcement powers stretch beyond their borders.” The report recommends that states regulate business conduct and “protect citizens from business-related harm to human rights, including through [business] tax planning, compliance and disclosure activities.”

South African Institute for Advanced Constitutional, Public, Human Rights and International Law (SAIFAC) and Lawyers for Better Business are holding a [“Tax Justice and Human Rights Conference”](#) on 21 November 2013 in Johannesburg, which will include legal perspectives on the issue of tax avoidance and human rights.

Further information:

- Business & Human Rights Resource Centre’s web-page on [Tax avoidance](#)
- [Tax Justice Network](#)

6. Conclusion & recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Advocates working to hold companies legally accountable for human rights abuses continue to face tremendous challenges in their work. While some progress has been made in some countries, much remains to be done. Many advocates have commented that the access to remedy pillar of the UN Guiding Principles framework has not been prioritised by those working to operationalise the Guiding Principles. There are still many barriers preventing victims of business-related human rights abuse from accessing legal remedies. For corporate legal accountability to progress, actions need to be taken by companies, governments, lawyers advising companies and victims’ advocates.

6.2 Recommendations

To companies: Companies’ obligations to respect human rights include the responsibility to avoid actions that harm victims’ human rights to access effective remedies. As former UN Special Representative John Ruggie suggested in an [“Issues Brief”](#) regarding the *Kiobel* lawsuit, companies should consider their corporate responsibility to respect human rights in determining their litigation strategies. We recommend that companies:

- Do not seek to avoid jurisdiction of one court, for example in their home country, if other available courts, for example in the country where the abuse took place, do not provide effective remedies.
- Avoid litigation strategies that could undermine or destroy existing judicial remedies for human rights abuses, particularly where the company has other means to defend itself.

To governments:

- Pass, enforce and defend laws that provide effective remedies for victims of human rights abuses involving companies – including victims of companies', or subsidiaries', impacts abroad if effective remedies are not available in the country where the abuse occurred, and collective or class actions.
- Take steps to address both legal and non-legal barriers faced by victims who seek to access effective remedies, such as allowing and providing mechanisms for (a) victims' lawyers to finance complex litigation and (b) victims to pursue collective or class actions; and defending activists and human rights lawyers who face intimidation or violence.

To lawyers advising companies:

- Advise corporate clients as to their responsibility to respect human rights under the UN Guiding Principles and other applicable international law, and the risks of failing to do so – even where those human rights obligations may not be the subject of clear and enforceable domestic laws.

To advocates for victims of human rights abuse:

- Seek to develop case law in countries and jurisdictions where courts do not yet provide effective remedies for victims of human rights abuse involving companies, including the countries where companies are headquartered, using civil and/or criminal mechanisms.

7. About Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

[Business & Human Rights Resource Centre](#) is an independent non-profit organization that brings information on companies' human rights impacts, positive and negative, to a global audience. We have researchers based in Brazil, Colombia, Hong Kong, India, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, UK, Ukraine and USA. Our [International Advisory Network](#), comprising 70 experts from all regions, is chaired by Mary Robinson, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and former President of Ireland. For further information about the Centre, see the "[About us](#)" section of our website, and a profile of our work by the *Financial Times* entitled "[A fair approach to human rights](#)". The Resource Centre was recently named as recipient of the [2013 Dodd Prize in International Justice and Human Rights](#).

8. Follow our work on Corporate Legal Accountability

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre will continue to bring the concerns of local advocates to an international audience and profile additional lawsuits against companies – both under-the-radar and high-profile cases.

We are planning research missions focussing on corporate legal accountability, the first in 2014 and others in 2015-2016. Likely destinations for these missions are Brazil, the Philippines and/or South Africa.

The Resource Centre's regional researchers in all regions will continue to help the Corporate Legal Accountability Project team identify cases from their regions to profile, particularly in regions that are under-represented on the portal.

Our Corporate Legal Accountability Portal, frequently updated with new case profiles and news of on-going lawsuits, is [here](#). The profiles link to the arguments from both sides of cases wherever available, as well as articles and commentaries. The portal demystifies cases in non-legal terms and also provides resources for lawyers and others working in the field. It provides an international platform for advocates and others to share information about corporate legal accountability and disseminate news about lawsuits to a global audience. The portal also contains commentaries by experts offering insights from a wide range of perspectives.

We publish a Corporate Legal Accountability Quarterly Bulletin in English, French and Spanish. Past issues of this bulletin are available [here](#). If you are interested in subscribing to this bulletin, please contact us, indicating which language version you wish to receive. Our previous Annual Briefing is available [here](#).

All of our website's items on lawsuits and regulatory actions involving companies and human rights abuses are [here](#).

If you would like to receive our free Weekly Updates, the sign-up form is [here](#).

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any questions or suggestions of material for our portal and website:

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