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Contact:

Smita Narula, Faculty Director, CHRGJ
+1-212-992-8824, smita.narula@nyu.edu

Nicholas Lusiani, Program Officer, ESCR-Net
+1-212-681-1236, nlusiani@ESCR-Net.org

RIGHTS GROUPS LAUNCH ONLINE HUB FOR CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

New Website Documents Human Rights Impacts of Business Practices, Supports Activists

(New York, June 28, 2011)—Human rights activists need a resource-sharing platform to effectively challenge abuses committed by increasingly powerful global business actors, said the International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net) and the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ) at NYU School of Law today. The groups issued their statement as they prepared to launch their new Business and Human Rights Documentation Project ([B-HRD](#), pronounced “Be Heard”) at a public event at NYU School of Law.

“Human rights defenders around the world are fighting the same fight against many of the same corporate actors, but until today they haven’t had a common forum where they could share their strategies and challenges,” said CHRGJ Faculty Director and B-HRD Co-founder, Smita Narula. “Learning from these common struggles is now more important than ever as corporations increasingly dominate a globalized world in the absence of proper regulatory frameworks. We believe that B-HRD is going to be a vital and powerful tool in the fight against corporate impunity.”

B-HRD is an interactive, multi-lingual information portal that connects and informs advocates by providing an online forum to share information about corporate accountability campaigns and advocacy strategies. Available in English, French, and Spanish, the site features content contributed by advocates and organizations around the globe including: an extensive, searchable *Database* of human rights documentation; an *In Focus* section that highlights recent developments in key campaigns against business-related abuse; and a *Tools & Strategy Forum* with resources and advocacy strategies to help advocates prevent and seek justice for business-related abuses.

B-HRD’s *In Focus* section highlights several campaigns against business-related abuse, including:

- ❖ The current threat to the Western Shoshone Nation in Nevada, U.S. caused by the destructive practices of the gold mining industry and by nuclear testing and nuclear waste disposal;
- ❖ Hazardous and unjust working conditions in China for the 7.7 million people working to manufacture hi-tech products for China’s \$232 billion electronic export industry;
- ❖ The dangerous pattern of unchecked human rights abuses by private military contractors in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan; and,
- ❖ The effects of Syngenta’s introduction and testing of genetically modified crops on Brazil’s rural farm workers.

“Community activists who dare to challenge business abuses worldwide are too often overpowered, under-resourced, and in some cases literally gunned-down by their adversaries,” said Niko Lusiani, Program Officer at ESCR-Net and Co-founder of B-HRD. “Yet against the toughest of odds, they persevere in their struggles to hold businesses to account and—when governments fail to act—to enforce human rights protection. B-HRD gathers and strengthens these voices, while contributing a long overdue set of resources to the global struggle to align business activities with basic human rights standards.”

B-HRD was designed to complement existing online resources, such as the [Business and Human Rights Resource Centre](#), and was jointly developed by ESCR-Net and CHRGI, as well as the [International Human Rights Clinic](#) at NYU School of Law.

B-HRD will be formally [launched](#) at a public event this evening, June 28th, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. The launch will feature an expert panel discussion and reception and will be held in Lipton Hall at NYU School of Law, located at 108 West 3rd Street. For more information about admission to this event, please click [here](#). To watch the live-stream, click [here](#).

B-HRD is available at www.B-HRD.org
For more about CHRGI, visit www.chrgi.org
For more about ESCR-Net, visit www.escr-net.org