

October 30, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

President Obama has endorsed the need for business to embrace the highest values and norms of responsible behavior. The Administration has an opportunity to become a global model for these norms by ensuring enforcement of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. These enshrine universal minimum standards of conduct accepted by a wide range of countries- including most of the world's largest economies- in areas including the environment, labor, human rights, and transparency.

In our global economy, corporations often operate where national legal structures are too weak or corrupt to hold them accountable for even the most egregious violations. The Guidelines are the only multilateral instrument dealing with these issues that has any provision for dispute resolution through direct involvement by national governments.

The United States has committed to implement the Guidelines since their establishment in 1976. The State Department houses a "National Contact Point" (NCP) committed to fill this function, as laid out in the Guidelines. Yet, despite the Guidelines' potential for problem solving, the US has had one of the lowest rates in the world of responding to complaints and facilitating engagement. No known cases have been successfully resolved as a result of the application of the Guidelines in the US.

Without any changes to law, the State Department can restructure the NCP and set new procedures for responding to complaints and integrating the Guidelines into its work and public materials.

The undersigned organizations, as a coalition of organizations across sectors, strongly encourage you to reform the US NCP so that it can meet its potential. We endorse the recommendations contained in the attached short paper as the best route to an NCP that will best represent the US.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you or another member of the leadership of the State Department to discuss these recommendations at your earliest convenience. Please contact Jessica Champagne at 202-730-7836 or jessica.champagne@seiu.org. We look forward to discussing this opportunity for reform.

Respectfully,



CC: Ambassador Karen Kornbluh, U.S. Mission to the OECD
Under Secretary of State Robert D. Hormats
Assistant Secretary of State Michael H. Posner