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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### U.S. Agency Makes First Step in Committing to an Independent Review of its Role in Human Rights Abuses in Liberia

**Jan. 24, 2014**—Today, the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (“OPIC”) committed for the first time to conducting an independent review of the impacts of its investment in an abusive biomass project in Liberia. On January 22, 2014, hundreds of Liberian farmers, charcoal producers and workers filed a complaint with OPIC demanding redress for its funding of a the project, operated by Buchanan Renewables, which caused serious human rights, labor and environmental abuses, including sexual abuse by company employees of local women.

While OPIC’s commitment is a positive first step, the coalition of groups supporting the complaint are still awaiting more information on what the review will entail. The Liberian victims have called on OPIC to conduct a rigorous, transparent and independent investigation. More information is needed regarding OPIC’s timeline and what steps it intends to take to ensure that its review of the project is meaningful and leads to remedy for those who have suffered, and continue to suffer, from the impacts of this abusive project.

OPIC’s statement can be found here: <http://www.accountabilitycounsel.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/1.24.14-OPIC-Commits-to-Independent-Review.pdf>.

#### **For more information, please contact:**

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