

PRESS RELEASE

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CALL TO THE SWISS NATIONAL BANK FOR THE PROTECTION OF CLIMATE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In the context of the anti-Chevron campaign, the Swiss shareholder group AAA+ and the Multiwatch network have initiated an appeal to the Swiss National Bank (SNB) requesting the bank to use its shareholder votes at the annual meeting of Chevron to protect climate and human rights. This US corporation is one of the biggest polluters in the world and owns a significant potential for CO₂ emissions that may accelerate global warming through the exploitation of its fossil reserves. It is regularly accused of violations of human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples in the world, such as in Burma, Ecuador and Nigeria.

According to its Investment Policy Guidelines, the SNB does not invest in companies which “seriously violate fundamental human rights or systematically cause severe environmental damage”. On this basis, the appeal calls on the bank to vote in favor of various resolutions presented by coalitions of organizations at the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Chevron in the United States on May 31, 2017. These proposals aim to promote the transition to a low CO₂ emission economy as well as to improve the information and the governance of the corporation. Two resolutions point to the immense pollution caused by oil operations in the Ecuadorian Amazon. After 23 years of lawsuits, peasants and indigenous peoples are still awaiting the rehabilitation of their lands and rivers. The lack of drinking water and the pollution of their environment continue to seriously affect their health and livelihoods.

There is a broad range of networks and organizations behind this call. They work in various fields such as climate protection, human rights, corporate accountability, the protection of indigenous peoples, the rights of future generations, labour rights and the right to health. It reflects the political will of Swiss society as a whole to commit itself to this cause. The historic vote of the Swiss people on Switzerland's energy strategy and the Paris Climate Agreement are in line with these goals. Moreover, a broad coalition of Swiss organizations has presented a popular initiative concerning corporate accountability (Konzerninitiative) demanding that transnational companies respect human rights and the environment.

Signatures (on May 23, 2017):

Alliance climatique-Suisse, AAA+ (Assemblée des actionnaires actifs positifs), Amnesty International-Switzerland, ASK (Groupe de travail Suisse-Colombie), Attac-Switzerland, CADTM, CSSR-Centrale sanitaire suisse romande, CETIM (Europe-Third World Center), Fossil Free Switzerland, Grands-parents pour le climat-Suisse, Greenpeace-Suisse, Comundo, World March of Women-Switzerland, Medicus Mundi, Multiwatch, STP (Society for Threatened Peoples), Solifonds, Stop TiSA, Uniterre.