

PRESS RELEASE

Brazil: in the wake of another deadly dam collapse, organizations call for Vale to be delisted from the UN Global Compact

Embargoed until 02/11/2019 10.00am (UTC-2) – An international group of civil society organizations submitted today a request for the exclusion of the Brazilian mining company Vale from the United Nations Global Compact, the largest network for corporate social responsibility in the world.

In light of the collapse of another iron ore waste tailings dam, this time in Brumadinho (Minas Gerais State), which has taken, up until now, the lives of 165 people, left 160 missing and 138 homeless, the organizations claim that Vale has violated the Global Compact's principles on human, labour and environmental rights, by not carrying out adequate risk assessment, not taking the necessary measures for prevention and mitigation and by failing to adopt measures of non-repetition after the 2015 collapse of the Mariana dam.

“The Brumadinho disaster shows that favouring profit over safety has been Vale's standard operating procedure.” The institutions claim in the allegation that, “It took another lethal dam collapse with unmeasurable human suffering and environmental destruction for Vale to announce a long due decision to decommission high-risk ‘upstream dams’ that are built with obsolete and unsafe technology.”

The allegation says that Vale deployed extensive political and financial resources to resist legal accountability for the first disaster. It further claims that the company adopted a discourse of commitment to the highest levels of corporate social responsibility, but has failed to review its business model, its procedures and its policies in order to prevent further catastrophes.

“Such a method of doing business is in conflict with the principles and the spirit of the Global Compact”, the institutions said. “Vale must bear the consequences for its failure to prevent such an outrageous disaster from happening just three years after the Mariana dam burst.”

In the document, institutions call for Vale's delisting from the Global Compact and the company to submit regular reports on measures being adopted to remediate environmental damage of both the Brumadinho dam Mariana dam bursts, the latter of 2015. They also call upon the Board of Directors of the UN Global Compact to require that Vale demonstrate its commitment to change its corporate culture, policies and procedures, through concerted actions that would make it a company that truly respects human and environmental rights.

The allegation is signed by: Asociación Ambiente y Sociedad, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, Clínica de Direitos Humanos da UFMG, Conectas Direitos Humanos, DAR (Derechos, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales), Defesa dos Territórios Frente à Mineração, DPLF (Due Process of Law Foundation), FARN (Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales), FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights), FUNDEPS (Fundación para el desarrollo de políticas sustentables), Global Justice Clinic of the New York University, Greenpeace Brasil, Justiça Global, MAB (Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens), Articulação Internacional dos Atingidos e Atingidas pela Vale, MiningWatch Canada, PODER (Project on Organizing, Development, Education, and Research), SOMO (Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations).

About the UN Global Compact

Launched in 2000, the UN Global Compact was an initiative of the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan with the aim of encouraging the worldwide business community to adopt corporate practices guided by principles of human, labour and environmental rights and fight against corruption. Over thirteen thousand signatories working in more than 160 countries participate in the Global Compact. Companies commit to ten principles and to provide information on their activities through periodic reports.

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