



SEP 10 2019

Ms. Emily Dwyer
Coordinator
Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability, CNCA
edwyer@cnca-rcrce.ca;

Dear Ms. Dwyer:

Thank you for your correspondence and for sharing your views on the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise. I regret the delay in replying to you.

The Government of Canada expects Canadian companies operating abroad to respect human rights and all applicable laws, to operate transparently and in consultation with host governments and local communities, and to work in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. Canadian companies abroad benefit from Canada's strong and competitive international reputation. They are expected to incorporate responsible business conduct (RBC) into their operations and to be accountable for their activities abroad.

With respect to the establishment of the Ombudsperson, on April 8, 2019, I announced the appointment of Ms. Sheri Meyerhoffer to this role, following an open, transparent, and merit-based selection process. The Ombudsperson is mandated to investigate allegations of human rights abuses arising from the operations of Canadian companies abroad, undertake fact-finding, make recommendations, monitor implementation of those recommendations and report publicly throughout the process. The Ombudsperson will initially focus on the mining, oil and gas, and garment sectors. However, Canada's expectations on RBC continue to apply to companies operating abroad in all sectors.

The government also consulted broadly with stakeholders, and sought external advice on what tools were required to engage in a credible and effective review of alleged human rights abuses. After careful consideration of that advice, I have concluded that the most effective way to ensure the Ombudsperson has the tools they need would be to enact a stand-alone legal framework for the office, including stipulating its powers to compel documents, witnesses, and other key testimony. To this end, I have asked my officials to begin the work required to pursue such a legal framework.

Following consultations with stakeholders, we have also taken the interim step of strengthening the existing legal mandate of the Ombudsperson. A new and strengthened Order in Council

defining the Ombudsperson's mandate was approved last week, and will be published in the Canada Gazette on September 11, 2019.

I believe that the appointment of the Ombudsperson is a meaningful step forward for Canada. This approach reinforces internationally recognized principles with tools, resources, advice and outreach to stakeholders across Canada and in countries where Canadian companies operate.

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Carr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jim" being more prominent than the last name "Carr".

The Honourable Jim Carr, P.C., M.P.