



15 October 2021

Dear Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen,

On behalf of Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, I am writing to request your support for an ambitious European Commission initiative on mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence (HREDD).

Human rights due diligence regulation is an important tool to protect the rights of people who work in global supply chains. The adverse impacts of business enterprises are often greatest in upstream value chains hosted in the Global South with low labour costs and weak regulation.

We firmly believe that strong EU HREDD legislation would support Southern countries in making choices that would benefit their populations and the environment the most. Otherwise, these countries could be tempted to signal their willingness to attract investors and trade by lowering their standards or by keeping them low. EU HREDD legislation would also support the work of local human rights defenders in the Global South.

Strong EU HREDD legislation would prevent irresponsible disengagement by requiring companies to evaluate all possible options for alternatives to disengagement and to consider, address and remedy the potential adverse impacts associated with a decision to disengage.

However, **EU HREDD legislation can only achieve these goals if due diligence obligations are extended to cover companies' full value chains and all internationally recognised human rights**. An obligation limited in scope would not protect those that are most vulnerable and at risk of harm. In addition, the legislation must have strong enforcement mechanisms. It must establish consequences for non-compliant companies and ensure access to judicial remedy for victims by holding corporations accountable when harm has occurred.

As the Commission is now finalising the proposal for a sustainable corporate governance directive, we hope that you will support the proposal to include in it ambitious and strong HREDD legislation where due diligence obligations would cover the full value chains.

Yours sincerely,

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