

make substantial contributions where they are most needed and corporations can assist in the development priorities of states. In the Sudan conflict, Talisman has contributed to alleviating some of the ravages of the civil war through projects that include: the building of a 60-bed hospital in Heglig, a medical dispensary, funding of medical treatments including vaccinations, provision of water wells, construction of roads, supporting local artists, and donations of desks and chairs to local schools.²⁹

As well, corporations might be able to use their leverage of economic and close relations with repressive regimes to induce them to improve their human rights practices. By engaging corporations and repressive regimes in an ongoing dialogue on human security may lead to incremental changes and the inclusion of certain human rights practices in business agreements. To neutralize the impact of revenues on conflict situations, accountability measures should be established to ensure that revenues are directed towards development projects and humanitarian purposes rather than to fuel conflict and facilitate repressive policies. MNCs have been reluctant to pursue this line of action due to concern with interfering in the sovereign responsibilities of states. The expectation is not for multinationals to pursue bilateral relationships with repressive regimes in isolation. These initiatives require the careful consideration and support of the international community who will gradually incorporate other actors into the system to ensure that it works as intended.³⁰

A contentious alternative is the use of long-distance political watchdogs in home governments. There are number of regulatory and non-regulatory options available for governments to pursue: strengthen the development and implementation of independent monitoring of codes of conduct in cooperation with multinational corporations; devise specific and detailed country and regional guidelines for businesses with respect to repressive regimes and countries with poor human rights records; refrain from export promotion, financial or investment incentives for firms who decide not to operate in a country where activities may enhance the repressive capacity of the state; in certain situations, the government should directly intervene in the activities of corporate citizens with recommendations for improving or withdrawing business operations; continue to develop linkages between human rights and development within the domestic and international sphere.³¹ While governments are in excellent positions to exhort business to meet human rights standards in their international operations, their role as a facilitator can also be negative. Human rights policies have often been known for its inconsistency as states continue to pursue a mixture of political, military, economic, and other interests in their foreign policy agendas. The subordination of human rights issues to other interests in foreign policy will affect government guidance to multinationals, and will continue to be hypocritical and indecisive. Human rights concessions will never be more than token gestures until multinationals and governments place a higher premium on relieving repression and human rights situations.

²⁹ <http://www.talisman-energy.com>

³⁰ "Human Security in Sudan: The Report of a Canadian Assessment Mission," pg. 67.

³¹ Forcese, Craig. Putting Conscience into Commerce: Strategies for Making Human Rights Business as Usual. (Montreal: International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development, 1997), pg. 91.