

DJPC's Position on Corporate Interference in Human Rights

DJPC dedicates itself to the protection of human rights and the promotion of economic justice.

DJPC opposes all forms of human rights violations, including those that result from economic reforms imposed by the U.S. and international financial institutions. The push for deregulation, liberalization, and privatization (see “Neoliberalism”) deprives populations of basic rights, social programs, and labor protections, while exploiting natural resources and human populations. Many trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), as well as bilateral agreements, fail to include enforceable provisions to protect workers’ and human rights—particularly those of women and children— and the environment. Even if developing countries impose strong labor and environmental standards, the investment provisions—Chapter 11 in NAFTA as one example—allow corporations to challenge such laws as barriers to trade, favoring corporate profits over the well-being of individuals.

Transnational corporate (TNC) expansion increasingly interferes with local societies and causes these deprivations. Favoritism for corporations over human and labor rights often results in land theft, intellectual property theft, physical harassment, and destruction of natural resources. Current projects that perpetrate these crimes throughout Latin America include water privatization, hydroelectric projects, cyanide and sulfuric acid heap-leach mining, and bio-prospecting.

DJPC reiterates its commitment to international standards for human, social, economic and cultural rights. To this end, DJPC advocates corporate responsibility and international financial involvement that:

- Uses established international human rights norms and laws as the foundation of interactions and agreements between corporations and local communities.
- Develops and implements democratic, transparent and accountable negotiations and agreements between corporations, governments, and local communities.
- Partners with local communities and members of civil society to determine the direction and control of projects.
- Adheres fully to international and host-country environmental laws and regulations, and promotes the conservation of biodiversity.
- Protects the provision and regulation of public services such as education, healthcare, transportation, energy, water, and other utilities.
- Respects indigenous rights, community-based natural resource management, and native intellectual property.

DJPC works to establish equitable public policy and corporate responsibility through:

- Education: of our members, our communities, our Congressional delegation on the history and manner in which TNC projects have led to humanitarian abuses and environmental degradation.
- Solidarity: partnering with local and national groups and international movements to advocate for these standards.
- Nonviolent Activism: calling, writing, visiting and keeping the pressure on members of our Congressional delegation to enact just foreign policies and to denounce violence and human rights abuses. Participating in rallies, press conferences, public meetings, and nonviolent protests.