

UN WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

Regarding suggestions for specific topics at LAMMP, we believe that the impact of business on women's human rights is an issue that has not been fully recognised yet. It is our view that this issue should be a priority for the second annual Forum. Among the guiding questions we would like to recommend:

1. We note that there are some explicit references to gender issues, but implementation is still far from being guaranteed. In this context, how can business and states convert the UN Guiding Principles into real improvement for marginalised women (in particular rural and indigenous women) affected by the extractive industries? How can a more gender-sensitive approach to the the extractive industries be created on a wider scale?
2. How will states and business ensure that rural and indigenous women take part in all relevant planning discussions including consultations?
3. How can indigenous women taking up the role of defenders of human and environmental rights be protected? At LAMMP we would like to highlight the particularly worrying situation of rural and indigenous women who oppose the imposition of megaprojects and denounce the forced evictions that have occurred to the benefit of private business interests and transnational corporations. The use of force, the widespread impunity and the criminalisation of rural and indigenous women across Latin America are acts which violate business and states' obligations under international human rights law, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Given this situation how will states comply with their duty?

Regarding measures that can be taken to correct human rights abuses, one problem rural and indigenous women have is their invisibility. Therefore in our view it is essential to ensure that there are funds available for grass-roots women to participate in international events and in forums where decisions are made regarding their future. Direct representation is crucial to reduce inequality between men and women, and also to understand the true impact of the extractive industry in women's lives.