



Giving Voice to the Earth

PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL UK SECTION www.peacebrigades.org

The Environment and its Defenders under Threat:
deforestation, mega projects and human rights
in Latin America, Africa and Asia



Thursday 26th June 2008

**Methodist Central Hall
Westminster
London**

9am – 7pm

The issues and the dangers for those defending the rights of local and indigenous communities & environmental concerns



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We face unprecedented global challenges from climate change and loss of biodiversity. Work being done by environmental human rights defenders around the globe has become more important and urgent.

The conference will explore threats to biodiversity and climate change from deforestation, pollution and mono-crop cultivation.

Identifying links between these and the violation of human rights with an examination of the international driving factors behind these abuses.

9.00 – 9.15	Registration
9.15 – 9.25	Welcome Baroness Francis D’Souza Patron PBI UK
Registration R	
9.25 – 9.40	We are hoping to have a DFID Minister speaking – awaiting confirmation
9.40 – 10.00	Laura Clarke Coordinator Peace Brigades International (PBI International Office)
Introduction to PBI & motivations for the conference	
10.00 – 10.20	Patricia Feeney Executive Director
Keynote Speech	Rights and Accountability in development (RAID)
10.20 – 10.40	Coffee and Tea



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10.40 am – 12.45pm Panel 1: Oil palm and other monocultures

Are agro-fuels the solution or are they creating even greater environmental problems for the future?

How is the massive expansion of oil palm and other monocultures affecting biodiversity, food security and human rights?

How are affected local communities resisting violations of their human rights and seeking to give voice to the earth?

What human costs are they encountering?

10.40–10.50 Panel discussion Chair:

Sophie Haspeslagh
ABColumbia

10.50 -11.40 Palm Oil cultivation:

Ana Maria Lozano

Environmental destruction & violation of human rights of local & indigenous communities in Colombia

Comisión Intereclesial Justicia y Paz
(Inter-Church Commission of Justice and Peace – Colombia)

11.40 - 12:00

Teresa Anderson

Agro fuels and food security in Africa

The Gaia Foundation and on behalf of
The African Biodiversity Network

12.00 – 12.20

Kenneth Richter
Friends of the Earth

Bio fuels and Human Rights

12.20 – 12.40

Questions

12.40 – 1.15

Lunch
Lunch is not provided but there is a café in the basement and places nearby that delegates are welcome to use



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1.15 pm – 3.00 pm

Panel 2: Deforestation

Approximately 350 million people depend directly on forests for survival; over the last 20 years 300 million hectares of tropical forests have been cleared.

What are the driving forces behind deforestation?

What have been the impacts on local communities in Latin America? Are the local communities' human rights being protected?

Are sustainability agreements protecting biodiversity?

1.15 – 1.25 Panel Introduction Chair

Dr. Graham Woodgate

Institute of the Study of the Americas,
London University

1.25 - 2.10 Colombia:

Deforestation and displacement

Father Henry Soler

COMISIÓN INTERECLESIAL JUSTICIA Y
PAZ (Inter-Church Commission of
Justice and Peace – Colombia)

2.10 - 2.30

Tropical deforestation: blaming the poor

Dr. Cath Long

Programme Director
The Rainforest Foundation UK

2.30 – 2.50

Questions

2.50– 3.05

Coffee break



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3.00 – 5.00 Panel 3: Transnational Corporations, International Law & Indigenous Populations

With greater pressure on resources and the expanding reach of transnational corporations, environmental destruction is increasing.

Are there global patterns of systematic abuse aimed at intimidating and silencing indigenous populations?

What role are multinational corporations playing?

What are the environmental impacts of expansion of the extraction industries?

Is the ILO convention 169 which gives consultation rights to indigenous peoples working?

Are there economically viable alternatives to this industry for local communities?

3.05 – 3.15 Panel Introduction Chair **Baroness Miller of Chilthome Domer**

3.15– 4.00

Transnational Mining Corporations,
indigenous rights and international law
Lake Izabal, Guatemala

Eloyda Mejía
Association of Friends of Lake Izabal
(ASALI) Guatemala.

4.00 – 4.20

Lessons learned from local
communities struggling with
multinational mining in the Philippines

Andy Whitmore
Philippine Indigenous Peoples Links-PIPLinks
Mines & Communities / London Mining

4.20 – 4.40

Kalahari Bushmen:
Establishing claim to
ancestral territories.

Gordon Bennett
Barrister
New Square Chambers

4.40 – 5.00

Coffee Break



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5.00pm – 7pm International Organisations working in Europe

What are the European and international driving forces behind environmental damage and human rights violations?

Are policies designed for protecting biodiversity and climate change working?

Are European guidelines on the protection of human rights defenders being implemented?

What differences are they making?

What are the policies that if implemented at international and local levels that would make a difference?

5.00 – 5.10 Panel Introduction Chair: **Jean Lambert Green Party MEP**

5.10 – 5.30

Agro fuels and European policy

Veerle Dossche

Forests and the European Union
Resource Network - FERN

5.30 – 5.50

Evolving debate: corporate
accountability

Peter Frankental

Economic Relations Programme
Director Amnesty International UK

5.50 – 6.10

Church and ecology

Liz Gallagher

Policy Researcher Climate Change
CAFOD

6.10 - 6.40

Various panelists will join the debate at
this point

6.40 – 7pm

Questions and discussion