



Press Conference Advisory

Contact: Matthew F. Smith, matthew@earthrights.org, +33.62.558.9623 (France)
Paul Donowitz, paul@earthrights.org, +011 917 345 2787 (USA)
Naing Htoo, nainghtoo@earthrights.org, +66 81 531 1256 (Thailand)

FRENCH OIL GIANT TOTAL FUELING NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN BURMA (MYANMAR), CONCEALING PAYMENTS, COMPLICIT IN VIOLENT ABUSES: *New Report Details Oil Company's Billion Dollar Natural Gas Payments to World's Newest Nuclear Threat*

Paris, France -- On Monday, 5 July 2010 the Washington DC-based EarthRights International will hold a press conference at the Paris headquarters of Secours Catholique to launch a new report exposing the role of Total (France), Chevron (US), and PTTEP (Thailand) in military-ruled Burma (Myanmar) since 1998. The 49-page report, titled *Energy Insecurity: How Total, Chevron, and PTTEP Contribute to Human Rights Violations, Financial Secrecy, and Nuclear Proliferation in Burma (Myanmar)*, provides new multi-billion dollar figures exposing the scandalous amount of revenue that Total and Chevron's gas pipeline has generated for the Burmese military regime since 1998. The report explains how these payments enable the Burmese junta to maintain its corrupt stranglehold on the impoverished country and could be used to fund the dictatorship's recently-exposed nuclear weapons program. The report documents how the oil companies are refusing requests by investors, labor unions, NGOs, and even former heads of state to disclose their payments to the Burmese state, and it reveals how the companies have misled their shareholders, the public, and governments about their legal ability to disclose their financial details in Burma. The report describes violent human rights abuses committed in the last year by the Burma Army providing security for the oil companies and the pipeline, and analyzes how the companies remain legally liable and can be sued in their home countries for the abuses documented in the report.

Speakers will include Matthew F. Smith — Senior Consultant with EarthRights International and one of the principal authors of the report — who will travel to Paris from the Thai-Burma border. Also speaking is Mr. Michel Roy, Coordinator of Publish What You Pay-France, an international campaign aimed at greater revenue transparency by oil, gas, and mining companies worldwide. Also joining the panel from the Thai-Burma border is Mr. Wong Aung, Coordinator of Burma's Shwe Gas Movement, a coalition of Burmese-led organizations advocating for greater human rights protections and public participation in large-scale oil and gas development in the country.

On the same day, EarthRights International will also be releasing an official report to the UN Office of High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) on the Burmese military regime's human rights abuses over the past four years in relation to mining, oil, natural gas, and hydroelectric development projects in the country. This separate report is part of the OHCHR's Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

EarthRights International has been documenting human rights abuses in Burma since 1994 and settled a landmark lawsuit in 2005 against Unocal Corporation, since acquired by Chevron, for their complicity in serious human rights abuses in the Yadana pipeline region.

Electronic copies of the full report will be available at 10:31 am Paris time on 5 July 2010 at www.earthrights.org.

SPEAKERS: *Matthew F. Smith*, Senior Consultant, EarthRights International
Wong Aung, Coordinator, Shwe Gas Movement
Michel Roy, Coordinator, Publish What You Pay-France

WHEN: **5 July 2010**
10:30 am (Paris)

WHERE: **Secours Catholique, Headquarters**
106 rue du Bac – 75007 Paris; room Jean Rodhain

NOTE: If you would like to make arrangements in advance to interview any of the attendees, or want more information about the report, please contact the above directly.

About EarthRights International (ERI)

EarthRights International is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization that combines the power of law and the power of people in defense of human rights and the environment, which we define as “earth rights.” We specialize in fact-finding, legal actions against perpetrators of earth rights abuses, training grassroots and community leaders, and advocacy campaigns. Through these strategies, ERI seeks to end earth rights abuses, to provide real solutions for real people, and to promote and protect human rights and the environment in the communities where we work.

www.earthrights.org

US Office
1612 K Street, NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 466-5188
Fax: (202) 466-5189
Email: infousa@earthrights.org

Southeast Asia Office
PO Box 123
Chiang Mai University
Chiang Mai 50202 Thailand
Tel: (66) 81 531 1256
Email: infoasia@earthrights.org

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