

*****Online News Conference Invitation*****

When Development Banks Do Harm

The Coalition for Human Rights in Development, with Human Rights Watch, CIVICUS, Front Line Defenders, and International Accountability Project, are pleased to invite you to an online news conference at 10 a.m. EDT on **Thursday, July 14, 2016**.

International development banks have long touted the importance of public participation. In recent years, however, a growing number of governments and private companies have carried out broad and sometimes brutal campaigns to intimidate and limit participation by independent groups and activists in development processes. Some have violently attacked individuals and communities who speak out about abuses linked to infrastructure, energy, and other development projects financed by these institutions.

We will issue a statement signed by over 140 human rights and development groups around the world, laying out the ways in which development banks can ensure that the activities they finance facilitate public participation and avoid adverse human rights impacts. We want people to be empowered to take part in crafting development agendas and in holding governments, banks, and businesses to account.

At the news conference, human rights defenders will share first-hand stories of their struggles to participate in or defend their rights in activities financed by development banks and the reprisals they have suffered. Organizations involved in monitoring and reporting on abuses and rights violations in large scale development projects will share ways development banks can ensure that development doesn't put marginalized communities or human rights defenders in danger.

What: News conference to issue a global call for development banks to respect human rights and ensure that their investments don't put human rights defenders at risk

Who: **Gretchen Gordon**, Coalition for Human Rights in Development
Dmitry Tikhonov, Uzbek human rights defender forced into exile
Soleyana S. Gebremichael, Ethiopia Human Rights Project
Jessica Evans, Human Rights Watch
Mandeep Tiwana, CIVICUS

When: **Thursday, July 14, 2016, 10 a.m. EDT**

Where: Connect via this link: <http://bit.ly/29Cle4p>
Log in to Gmail to use the Q&A function

For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact:

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In Washington, DC, for Human Rights Watch, Jessica Evans (English): +1-917-930-7763; or evansj@hrw.org. Twitter: @evans_jessica
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