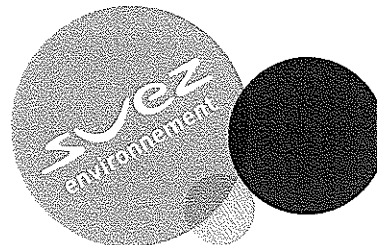


SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT

1 RUE D'ASTORG
75008 PARIS, FRANCE
TEL +33 (0)1 58 18 50 00
FAX +33 (0)1 58 18 50 50
WWW.SUEZ-ENVIRONNEMENT.COM



Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation

ESCR Section
Special Procedures Division
UNOG-OHCHR
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Genève 10,
Suisse

Paris, 25 March 2010

Re : Human right to water and sanitation – Issues about private sector participation.

Dear Mrs De Albuquerque,

I have been informed of the investigation launched by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the question of compatibility between the human right to water and the involvement of private operators in water and sanitation services.

As Senior Executive Vice President of SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT in charge of the water business, I am specifically concerned by the issue of access to drinking water and sanitation services. Through a portfolio of contracts and licenses with local authorities, SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT is currently serving 90 million people in drinking water and 58 million in waste water services worldwide, including a significant proportion in non OECD countries.

SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT adheres to the Human Right to Water and Sanitation, and we see ourselves as agents of the implementation of this right. Our position on this matter, and our track record in providing access to deprived people has been presented in the contribution that we have submitted in April 2007 in response to the consultation launched by the High Commissioner on Human Rights on the Right to Water. You will find a copy of this document in attachment; it includes four annexes describing mechanisms which we have been involved in, in France, China (Macao), Hungary and Argentina, designed for improving the access of low income households in a concrete manner and in different contexts .

SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT

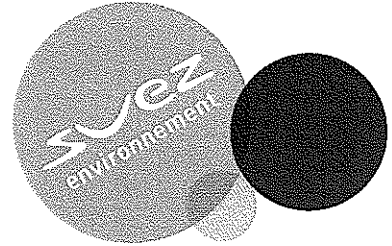
1 RUE D'ASTORG

75008 PARIS, FRANCE

TEL +33 (0)1 58 18 50 00

FAX +33 (0)1 58 18 50 50

WWW.SUEZ-ENVIRONNEMENT.COM



Since this report has been written, SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT has continued to be active in this matter, notably through two subsidiaries (PALYJA in Jakarta and LYDEC in Casablanca) which are currently implementing pilot programmes in shantytowns of those two cities, funded by the "Global Partnership for Output Based Aid" managed by the World Bank. We would be pleased to invite you for a site visit.

About the compatibility between private sector involvement and right to water, SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT shares the position expressed by AquaFed, the international federation of private water operators. This question is a theoretical one, and refers to an ideological vision, but not to the reality of the role of the stakeholders. Operators, whatever their status (public entities or private companies) are agents of public policies, in charge of managing services under the framework of regulations or contractual obligations set up by public authorities, which give them mandates to operate the public services in their jurisdictions. Private operators may or may not, depending on the contractual and legal framework in which they provide their services, be active in the implementation of the right to water on the ground; but the figures provided in our 2007 report prove that when this framework is conducive, they can provide very significant contributions.

I remain at your disposal for any clarification if needed.

Yours sincerely,


Bernard GUIRKINGER

Senior Executive Vice President