



**Joint statement of the ACCA and partner organisations attending the 4th OEIGWG session
Released on 26 October 2018**

The African Coalition for Corporate Accountability (ACCA) and its partner organisations, convened for the 4th session of the Open-Ended Inter-Governmental Working Group on Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises (IGWG) held from 15th to 19th October 2018 in Geneva. The IGWG - through its mandate in Res/26/9 seeks to elaborate on a Binding Treaty that will strengthen the respect, promotion, protection, and fulfilment of human rights in the context of business activities “of a transnational character”.

The ACCA and partners commend the African State delegations that took part in these important negotiations around the “Zero Draft” of the Treaty in Geneva.

The Africa Group, led by Togo this year, expressed the commitment of African nations to the process of Treaty negotiation, noting the need for an international framework regulating the activities of transnational corporations with respect to human rights. South Africa, as a co-sponsor of the Treaty, as well as Namibia, Egypt, Morocco and Burkina Faso also contributed substantively to the Treaty negotiations throughout the week.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) and experts particularly called on the IGWG to ensure the explicit inclusion of rights for human rights defenders, protection for the rights of indigenous peoples including the right to free, prior and informed consent, and a strong feminist lens and gender justice approach to be incorporated in the text, due to the particularly profound impact that corporate abuses have on women.

It is important that all African States and organs along with various regional and sub-regional bodies take cognisance of the importance of this process in strengthening access to remedy measures for corporate abuses committed by transnational corporations (TNCs). We continue to witness an increase in foreign direct investment across the continent, which creates a vacuum in strong regulatory and remedial mechanisms especially for TNCs largely due to rules around sovereignty and other bi-lateral agreements. A binding Treaty with a strong African voice will play a vital role in addressing some of the critical issues around corporate responsibility to respect human rights in all their operations - both direct and indirect and in the provision of access to remedy for any abuse.

We call upon other African states to amplify their commitment to dismantle corporate power, end impunity and emulate the active participation of African states that spoke out during the session.

We commend the bravery of CSOs and human rights defenders representing adversely affected communities across the African continent and strongly encourage them to further engage with their governments on the need for a binding Treaty.

For more information on the ACCA and media requests, please contact Damian Oakes, coordinator@accahumanrights.org.