Global Civil Society Organizations Call on Maersk Shareholders to Demand Maersk Disclose its Human Rights Practices

17 March 2025

Danish shipping giant A.P. Møller – Mærsk A/S has faced intense scrutiny for its potential role in facilitating the transfer of arms and military equipment to Israel, thereby risking involving itself in activities that raise serious human rights concerns. Despite increasing global demands for corporate accountability and heightened due diligence efforts tied to the devastating violence seen in Gaza over the last 17 months, Maersk may be falling short of aligning its operations with international human rights standards. A proposal due to be discussed by the shareholders, demands immediate action by Maersk to disclose its human rights due diligence processes concerning arms shipments to Israel. This resolution is a direct challenge to the company to adhere to international law and standards, which include transparently demonstrating its respect for human rights.

The undersigned human rights organizations, therefore, urge Maersk shareholders to use their vote at the upcoming Annual General Meeting on March 18th, to ensure the company upholds its own commitments to human rights and the principles of international law and standards. This request aligns with Maersk's endorsement to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights, which state that a company's human rights responsibility requires it to show that it respects human rights in practice, providing a certain level of transparency and accountability to relevant stakeholders, including investors.

The urgency of this resolution is underscored by the devastating impact of Israel's military actions in Gaza, which have resulted in over 48,000 Palestinian deaths, including more than 13,000 children, and tens of thousands presumed dead under the rubble. The deployment of over 25,000 tons of explosives has destroyed civilian infrastructure and raised serious allegations of grave human rights violations and crimes against humanity. Also, in January 2024 the International Court of Justice found that in Gaza there was a plausible risk of genocide and issued provisional measures that Israel has so far disregarded. Maersk's potential involvement risks exposing the company—and by extension, its shareholders—to profound legal and reputational risks. This reality demands that shareholders insist on accountability and transparency from Maersk.

In light of these concerns, the proposed resolution emphasizes the critical need for Maersk to publicly disclose its human rights due diligence processes, particularly with respect to arms shipments. Transparency in these activities is indispensable for evaluating the company's potential adverse impacts on human rights and ensuring accountability. The resolution is firmly supported by the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and backed by international demands from UN experts, justice mechanisms, and human rights organizations calling for a comprehensive arms embargo to end the catastrophic loss of life in Gaza.

Despite Maersk advising shareholders to vote AGAINST the proposal, it is evident that disclosing human rights due diligence measures is essential for responsible corporate behavior.

Therefore, we support the goals of the resolution and strongly encourage shareholders to vote in favor of the proposal “on disclosure of human rights due diligence processes” at the AGM. Voting for this resolution is a critical move toward ensuring Maersk adheres to rigorous human rights standards, crucial for preventing human suffering possibly associated with its operations. This action represents a moral imperative, underscoring the need for corporate practices that respect human lives and dignity.

List of Organizational Signatories:

Abolitionist Law Center

ActionAid Denmark

Adasina Social Capital

Al-Haq

American Friends Service Committee

Amnesty International

Antimilitaristes-MOC València

Arab Left Forum

Association France Palestine Solidarité (AFPS)

The Association of Norwegian NGOs for Palestine

Australia Palestine Advocacy Network

Australian Centre for International Justice

Bank Better

BDS Murcia

BDS País Valencià

BDS Sverige

Boycott Bloody Insurance

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT)

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East - Saskatoon Chapter

The Canadian BDS Coalition and International BDS Allies

Centro de Estudios Ecuménicos-México

Control Arms

DAWN

Ekō

Erev Rav

European Jews for Palestine

Food Not Bombs

Global Justice Now

Global Legal Action Network (GLAN)

Independent & Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN)

Inner West for Palestine

Intersindical Alternativa de Catalunya

International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network - UK

Jews for Just Peace - Denmark

Jews 4 Palestine-Ireland

Jewish Network for Palestine

Jewish Voice for a Just Peace in the Middle East – Germany

Judiskt Upprop (JU)

Judeus pela Paz e Justiça

Just Peace Advocates/Mouvement Pour Une Paix Juste

Justice For All Canada

Labour Against the Arms Trade (Canada)

Manitoba Healthcare Workers for Palestine

The Middle East Children's Alliance for Peace

Movimento pelos Direitos do Povo Palestino e pela Paz no Médio Oriente - MPPM

Nahlieli: Jews for Justice in Palestine - Finland

New Unity Movement

No Weapons for Genocide

Northern Rivers Friends Of Palestine

Ontario Palestinian Rights Association

Oxfam Denmark

Palestine Solidarity Alliance

Palestinian and Jewish Unity (PAJU)

PAX

Peace Action

Permanent Peace Movement

Plataforma Unitária de Solidariedade com a Palestina (PUSP)

Polish-Palestinian Justice Initiative Kaktus

Progressive International

Project of Heart

The Rights Forum

Saferworld

Scientists for Global Responsibility (UK)

Tech Justice Law Project

Tipping Point UK

Transnational Institute

Union juive française pour la paix (UJFP)

United Against Inhumanity (UAI)

United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR)

The United Church of Canada - Palestine Network, Shining Waters Region

Vision GRAM-International

Vredesactie

War on Want

Winnipeg South Centre for Justice

Women in Black – London

Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom