

PROPOSAL FOR A GLOBAL SET OF CORPORATE STANDARDS—2004

Whereas, our company, as a global corporation, faces numerous complex problems as the international context within which our company operates is becoming increasingly diverse.

A new poll on corporate social responsibility found that 60% of Americans that own shares say that a company's record on its broader social responsibilities influenced their decision to purchase or sell its shares. Respondents ranked "equal and fair treatment of all employees" more highly than "providing quality products at the lowest possible price" as a key expectation of corporate behavior. (Enviro-nics International, 2/2001)

Companies are faced with ethical and legal challenges arising from diverse cultures and political and economic contexts. These require management to address issues that include human rights, workers' right to organize and bargain collectively, non-discrimination in the workplace and sustainable community development. Companies should find effective ways to eliminate the use of child labor, forced labor, bribery and harmful environmental practices.

We believe global companies need to implement comprehensive codes of conduct, such as those found in the "Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Bench Marks for Measuring Business Performance," developed by an international group of religious investors. Companies need to formulate policies, programs and practices to address the challenges they face in the global marketplace.

Our company should be in a position to assure shareholders that its employees are treated fairly and paid a sustainable living wage wherever they work in the global economy. One element of ensuring compliance is the utilization of independent monitors made up of respected local human rights, religious and other non-governmental organizations that know the local culture. A number of global companies are developing credible code enforcement mechanisms that include independent monitoring.

Improving the quality of life for employees and their communities can lead to increase productivity and consumer confidence, enhancing the bottom line for the company.

RESOLVED, the shareholders request the Board of Directors to review or amend, where applicable, its code or standards for its international operations and report a summary of this review to shareholders by October 2004.

Supporting Statement

We recommend the review include:

1. A description of policies which are designed to protect human rights – civil, political, social, cultural and economic – consistent with respect for human dignity and International Labor Organization's core labor standards.
2. A report of efforts to ensure that the company does not employ children under the age of fifteen, or younger than the age of completing compulsory education in the country of manufacture where such age is higher than fifteen.
3. A report of company policies ensuring that there is no use of forced labor, whether in the form of prison labor, indentured labor or bonded labor.
4. Establishment of consistent standards for workers' health and safety, practices for handling hazardous wastes and protection of the environment, as well as promoting a fair and dignified quality of life for workers and their communities.

A Company needs comprehensive global standards to guide its decisions in order to compete successfully in the 21st Century.