

Cemex complicit in Israel's violations of international law

Mexican multinational building material industry Cemex is “committed to abide by the laws and regulations of every jurisdiction in which we operate.”¹ However, the research of Who Profits? — a project of the Israeli Coalition of Women for Peace — reveals a different picture. The company is involved in several illegal activities in the occupied West Bank.

Cemex full subsidiary, ReadyMix Industries, owns plants in various Israeli settlements. This includes Mevo Horon, the Atarot industrial zone and the Mishor Edomim industrial zone, all in the occupied West Bank, and Katzerin in the occupied Golan Heights.²

All Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Syrian Golan Heights are illegal under international law.

ReadyMix also provides concrete elements for the construction of Israel’s wall and military checkpoints in the West Bank and provides concrete for the construction of Israel’s controversial Jerusalem light rail project. The project strengthens Israel’s grip on the greater Jerusalem area by connecting West Jerusalem with several settlements in or surrounding occupied East Jerusalem.

In addition, Cemex owns fifty percent of Yatir Quarry through its subsidiary ReadyMix Industries.³ The Yatir quarry lies next to the Israeli settlement of Teneh Omarim in the south Hebron hills of the West Bank. In Yatir quarry, Palestinian natural resources are exploited for the needs of the Israeli construction industry.

On 1 May 2011, human rights researcher Dror Etkes documented how a Volvo truck loaded with construction material left Yatir quarry and entered Israel via Meitar checkpoint. According to Etkes, trucks transport construction material from the quarry into Israel several times per day.⁴ (Include picture taken by Dror)

The Israeli mining activities in Yatir quarry in the occupied West Bank are contrary to international law. Article 55 of The Hague Regulations of 1907 explicitly stipulates on quarrying that it “forbids wasteful or negligent destruction of the capital value, whether by excessive cutting or mining or other abusive exploitation, contrary to the rules of good husbandry.” UN General Assembly Resolution 1803, passed in 1962, states that permanent sovereignty over natural wealth and resources is a “basic constituent of the right to self-determination.”

In 2009, the Israeli human rights organization Yesh Din filed a petition with the Israeli high court, demanding a halt to illegal mining activity in West Bank quarries, including Yatir quarry. Attorneys representing Yesh Din called upon the court to put an end to this “clearly illegal activity, which constitutes blunt and ugly colonial exploitation of land we [Israel] had forcefully seized.”⁵ The Israeli high court refused to order a temporary halt to mining activities.

Cemex boasts on its website that they act “in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the law, our Code of Ethics and our corporate policies. At CEMEX, we must comply with all applicable laws and policies, without exception. The importance of this principle cannot be overstated: if we compromise on matters that we perceive as small or unimportant, we cross a threshold that can easily lead us to more serious misconduct, putting the company's and our own personal situation at

1 <http://www.cemex.com/InvestorCenter/CorporateGovernance.aspx>

2 <http://www.whoprofits.org/Company%20Info.php?id=704>

3 <http://www.whoprofits.org/Company%20Info.php?id=703>

4 <http://electronicintifada.net/content/multinational-companies-mining-occupied-palestinian-land/9974>

5 <http://www.yesh-din.org/sys/images/File/QuarriesPetitionEng%5B1%5D.pdf>

risk, and causing grave harm to our corporate culture.”⁶

Meanwhile, the plundering of Palestinian natural resources continues. Who Profits? filmed a truck which transported construction material from Yatir quarry into Israel. (Add link to video on youtube)

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⁶ <http://www.cemex.com/AboutUs/EthicsAndCompliance.aspx>