



17 September 2018

Dear Member of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment,

We are contacting you because we are aware that the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment will be discussing a request to invite the ESB to come before the Committee to discuss its importation of coal from the infamous Cerrejón mine in Colombia for use in the Moneypoint power station.

We have collectively signed this letter to encourage you to support this request and to have a full public meeting on this significant issue of public concern.

Cerrejón is notorious for the destruction of the environment, forcible displacement of indigenous people and Afro-Colombians living in the area, and workers' rights abuses. During the past 32 years, more than 20,000 Afro-Colombian and indigenous people have been forced from their traditional homes to make way for this ever-growing mine.

The mine is slowly exterminating the indigenous people in this land. The communities do not want this mine. They want access to water and other natural resources in the area so that they can produce agricultural products and live their lives in harmony, free from the environmental degradation this mine brings.

Figures from the ESB show that Moneypoint has used 12,568,717 tonnes of imported coal since 2011. Some 11,264,239 tonnes of this coal, just under 90%, has come from Colombia, and the vast majority of that has come from this mine in the north east of Colombia.

We are therefore facilitating the environmental degradation and human rights abuses this mine creates by importing such vast quantities of its coal.

We also want to highlight that the consequences of using coal for energy production go far beyond the impacts on affected communities in Colombia – the ESB’s burning of coal is worsening human-induced climate change, which has very serious and long-term impacts on a global scale.

The Irish Government is the main shareholder in ESB and therefore the importation of this coal with Irish tax payers’ money raises significant public concerns and undermines the Irish Government’s committed to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the protection of human rights in Colombia.

We again encourage you to support the request for the ESB to come before the Committee to discuss its importation of coal from Cerrejón.

Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you would like more information or to discuss this further.

Signed:



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