



Department for International Trade

Ranil Jayawardena MP
Minister for International Trade

King Charles Street
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AH

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E jayawardena.correspondence@trade.gov.uk
W gov.uk

Angus Brendan MacNeil MP
Chairman of the International Trade Committee
House of Commons,
London
SW1A 0AA

24th July 2020

Dear Angus,

Publication of two complaints handled by the United Kingdom National Contact Point for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

As you know, the Department for International Trade hosts the United Kingdom's National Contact Point (the NCP) for the OECD Guidelines (the Guidelines) for Multinational Enterprises. The NCP has two key roles in:

- Promoting the Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct as part of HM Government's wider agenda on corporate social responsibility.
- Handling complaints related to the Guidelines.

Ministers play no part in the NCP's decisions on complaints. Nonetheless, I am writing to inform you that the NCP has recently published two Initial Assessments; the details of which are summarised below. The Initial Assessment process is to determine whether the issues raised merit further examination. It does not determine whether the company has acted consistently with the Guidelines. The Initial Assessments are available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-national-contact-point.

1. Initial Assessment of the Complaint from Client Earth about British Petroleum (BP)

In December 2019, the NCP received a complaint made by Client Earth about BP, an oil and gas company incorporated in the UK. Client Earth claimed that BP advertising campaigns breached the general policies and environment chapters of the Guidelines. Client Earth alleged that the campaigns were misleading in the way that BP's low-carbon energy activities were presented. The NCP examined the complaint and concluded that the complaint did not merit further examination as the advertising campaigns which were the subject of the complaint finished in February 2020 and it would not contribute to the purposes or effectiveness of the Guidelines. As the complaint has not been accepted, this Initial Assessment concludes the complaint process under the Guidelines.

2. Initial Assessment of the Complaint from UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI) about PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

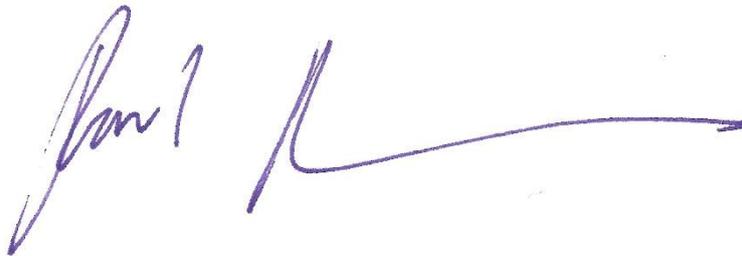
In October 2019, the NCP received a complaint made by UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI) against PricewaterhouseCoopers. The allegations set out in the complaint related to financial services overseen by PwC in Palestine. The NCP examined the complaint and found that there were grounds for a further examination of the complaint.

The NCP would now normally approach both parties to determine whether they are willing to engage in a mediation process, with the aim of agreeing how the issues identified can be successfully addressed. In this case, the parties to this complaint have recently participated in mediation in relation to a previous, separate complaint which did not come to a successful agreement. The parties have agreed that mediation on this new complaint would unlikely progress matters. Therefore, the NCP has moved directly to the further examination stage of its complaints process.

I hope this letter is helpful to you.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ranil', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

RANIL JAYAWARDENA MP
Minister for International Trade