

Rachel Corrie

FOUNDATION
for Peace and Justice



203 East 4th Avenue, Suite 307 • Olympia, Washington 98501 • (360) 754-3998
info@rachelcorriefoundation.org • www.rachelcorriefoundation.org

August 18, 2011

National Building Museum
401 F Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Attention: Chase W. Rynd, Executive Director

Dear Mr. Rynd:

It has come to our attention that the National Building Museum has selected Caterpillar Inc. to receive its prestigious Henry C. Turner Prize for Innovation in Construction Technology and that on September 14th your program series will feature the corporation's chief technology officer discussing "the company's past, present, and future." We write today with great concern and with knowledge of how profoundly disturbing this news will be to thousands, if not millions, here in the U.S., around the world, and particularly in the Middle East. Very respectfully, we request that you reconsider your choice of award recipients and meet with our representatives to discuss the matter further.

For decades, Caterpillar Inc. has continued to sell equipment to the Government of Israel that it knows is systematically used to demolish Palestinian homes, to kill and injure unarmed Palestinian and international civilians, to uproot olive trees and destroy agricultural land, and to facilitate the expropriation of Palestinian territory through construction of Jewish-only settlements and a separation-annexation wall. In 2003, our daughter, Rachel Corrie, a nonviolent human rights activist and observer, was killed by an Israeli operated Caterpillar D9R bulldozer as she tried to prevent the demolition of a Palestinian family's home in the Gaza Strip. In both the West Bank and Gaza, Israel has used Caterpillar D9 bulldozers to demolish Palestinians' homes while civilians were still inside, killing them. For decades, Caterpillar Inc. has sold bulldozers, built to military specifications, that are then weaponized in Israel and used in operations against the Palestinian people – often without provocation, without compensation, and against international law. Far from being an innovator of construction throughout the world, the CAT brand and its bulldozers have become a symbol of destruction – of Palestinian homes, lands, and lives.

Caterpillar Inc. has long been on notice about the pattern of Israeli human rights violations committed with its equipment. Human rights organizations and, also, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory have previously called on the corporation to cease profiting from the destruction of civilian lives and infrastructure. In 2004, Amnesty International denounced Israel's razing of Palestinian dwellings as "a grave breach of international humanitarian law," and recommended that Caterpillar "take measures – within the company sphere of influence – to guarantee that its bulldozers are not used to commit human rights violations, including the destruction of homes, land and other properties." In 2010, Amnesty International reiterated the gravity and urgency. In 2004, Human Rights Watch demanded that Caterpillar "immediately suspend" the sale of D9 bulldozers to the Israeli military. Just last year, more than 16,000 U.S. citizens from across the country called for investigation of Israeli violations of U.S. arms export laws with CAT equipment, and for an end to Caterpillar D9 deliveries to the Israeli military until their use complies with U.S. and international law.

Caterpillar Inc.'s responses have been inadequate and contrary, we believe, to its own Code of Worldwide Business Conduct. Corporation officials state they have "neither the legal right nor the ability to monitor and police individual use" of their equipment. They pass responsibility to the U.S. Government which funds the

purchases. But in fact, Caterpillar Inc. has a choice about how it conducts business, with whom, and about what practices it will continue to enable. The corporation has a moral and legal responsibility to cease sales of CAT equipment used in a clear pattern of human rights abuses by the Israeli government and military.

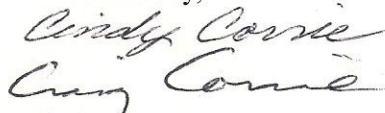
The Henry C. Turner Prize announcement cites Caterpillar Inc.'s 85-year history as a "construction industry leader" with innovations that allow their "machines to be used more safely and efficiently." Jury member Art Gensler states that the corporation has taken "American technology and know-how around the world." Before proceeding with this award, please consider Caterpillar Inc.'s history in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem where far too long its "American technology and know-how" have sowed devastating destruction, and where inaction and lack of leadership have made it complicit in continuing violations of human rights and international law. The award cites Caterpillar's admirable response to "global concerns about climate change," but, unfortunately, the corporation's parallel lack of response to the human suffering perpetrated with its equipment is deeply troubling. Presentation of the Turner prize as planned will send a poorly timed message to the Middle East and elsewhere about the insensitivity of the jury, the museum, and the U.S. more broadly.

The Henry C. Turner prize is awarded for exceptional leadership by an individual or team of individuals in construction technology. Previous recipients appear to have more aptly met this criteria and often with consideration for their commitment to social justice. In seeming to break with the intention of the prize by awarding it to a multinational corporation, we believe you have made an unfortunate and potentially harmful choice in Caterpillar Inc. We are able to appreciate Caterpillar's technological innovation and even to recognize that much of its business is devoted to genuinely constructive purposes, but we are unable to blind ourselves to the damage perpetrated against the Palestinian people under the Caterpillar name, with its long-term knowledge, and without a proper response.

We appreciate that the National Building Museum is "above all a forum for the development, exploration, and exchange of ideas," and a venue for "informed debate about the built environment and its impact on people's lives." In keeping with your intention of "fostering lively discussion" where "every American can play a part in the continual improvement of our built environment," we look forward to engaging with you further about this matter. We do not expect either the National Building Museum or Caterpillar Inc. to solve the problems of the Middle East, but we do look forward to hearing from you about how the Henry C. Turner Prize can avoid sending a message that inadvertently congratulates involvement in human rights violations and, how instead, you can convey that even the most gifted and innovative builders must, also, meet their obligations as responsible global citizens.

On Wednesday, August 24th, we plan to inform our constituencies about this issue and would appreciate your positive response prior to that date.

Most sincerely,



Cindy and Craig Corrie
Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice

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CC: M. Arthur Gensler, Harold J. Permelee, Clyde Tatum, Janice L. Tuchman, Thomas R. Turner