



Women in Europe for a Common Future | WECF

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WECF SPEAKERS DEMAND A NUCLEAR FREE CLIMATE AGREEMENT!

On Friday 14th May, during the negotiations on the United Nations Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) taking place at the UN Headquarters in New York, Bremley Lyngdoh on behalf of WECF and the indigenous people affected by uranium mining spoke during the Side Event entitled *Access to Civil Nuclear Energy: Towards a Responsible Development of Nuclear Energy* who were present at our side event.

Mr Lyngdoh is a member of the Khasi tribe of Meghalaya in Northern India. He presented the pre-view of the documentary movie „Where the Clouds Come Home“ (produced by UK film-maker, Chris Stone, of Small Seed Films) which addresses the proposed uranium mining currently threatening the livelihoods of indigenous people in Meghalaya.

Meghalaya is the home of one of the oldest primary forests in the world, with an immense richness in biodiversity, but unfortunately, the forest sits on a large source of uranium. The Indian uranium mining company has started testing uranium extraction, which has led to pollution of water, air and soil, and illness, which the local communities believe are linked to the low-level radioactivity. With the region being on a mountain slope 5 kilometers from the border of Bangladesh, with high rainfall patterns, transboundary water pollution will be unavoidable, and it can be expected that Bangladeshi rice farmers will be eating radioactive rice.

Mr. Lyngdoh questioned the so-called climate-friendliness of nuclear energy, with uranium mining being the most carbon-intensive mining operations, even without considering the thousand of year containment of the radioactive uranium mining tailings.

WECF's side event *“Uranium Mining – Clear Perspectives on a dirty business”* which was kindly supported by the Heinrich Boell Foundation was held on the CSD on May 11. Several Indigenous People from different countries like Niger, New Mexico (USA), Kazakhstan, India and Finland were invited to share their personal experiences with uranium mining in their communities.

The side event concluded with recommendations to the UN CSD from the indigenous peoples represented. As a first step an international tribunal on the impacts of uranium mining which includes participation of NGOs and affected communities should be organized.

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