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# Faith-based organizations seek trafficking-free Olympics

Jerry Filteau | Jun. 5, 2012

Before the summer Olympics open in London this July, Christian responsible investment groups are working to prevent any games-related human trafficking -- from prostitution in London hotels to slave and child labor in the global supply chains of Olympic sponsors and suppliers.

Julie Tanner, assistant director of socially responsible investing for Christian Brothers Investment Services, told *NCR* that a coalition including the Christian Brothers agency and 36 similar faith-based U.S. and British organizations is ?heartened that so many companies [involved in the London Olympics] responded? positively to a campaign for commitments to prevent or halt all forms of human trafficking in their commercial activities.

?A lot of companies are taking their responsibilities seriously? to assure that their products or services do not depend on or support child or slave labor or the sex trade, she said.

The XXX Olympiad is to take place in London July 27-Aug. 12.

The coalition, led by Christian Brothers Investment Services, includes the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility; the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility in the United Kingdom; US SIF: The Forum for Sustainable and Responsible Investment; and ECPAT-USA (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes).

The coalition, whose members represent some $58 billion in investment management, sent letters to 32 companies that are suppliers or sponsors of the Olympics, calling for immediate action to train staff and suppliers to recognize and avoid the trafficking of workers into slavery, to monitor their supply chains, and to examine hiring and recruitment practices.

Tanner said they also contacted a number of major hotel chains that accommodate tourists in Great Britain, seeking stronger policies or policy implementation to prevent use of their facilities for prostitution during the Olympics.

To involve the public, the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility has launched a Celebration Without Exploitation Web page that includes links to fact sheets and ways to take action as well as tools for investors and companies.

Tanner said the coalition of responsible investors would like to see the International Olympic Committee take up the challenge of making its own rules to assure that suppliers, sponsors and host cities of the quadrennial Olympic Games do not engage in any form of exploitative human trafficking.

She said members of the coalition have initiated similar contacts with FIFA, the international soccer federation that sponsors the annual World Cup, and with the National Football League, under whose auspices the U.S. Super Bowl is played each year.

It would be ?much better? if such influential sports organizations had their own ethical guidelines against all forms of human trafficking instead of forcing organizations devoted to responsible investments to engage in regular campaigns to call on them to observe basic ethical practices, she said.

[Jerry Filteau is *NCR* Washington correspondent. His email address is jfilteau@ncronline.org.]

**ON THE WEB**

Celebration Without Exploitation
iccr.org/issues/subpages/olympics_home.php

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