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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ICCR LAUNCHES NEW ALLIANCE TO AMPLIFY GLOBAL INVESTOR INFLUENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

**NEW YORK, NY, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2017** – Today the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) announced the formation of the [Investor Alliance for Human Rights](#), a new initiative designed to expand collective investor action on a range of critical human rights issues.

The Alliance, the first of its kind, builds on ICCR’s long-term shareholder engagements on business and human rights and invites active participation and collaboration from the larger investment community.

The primary objectives of the Alliance will be to:

- Build a collective action platform that allows for the quick mobilization of a broad group of investors to advocate on urgent business and human rights issues. Alliance members will address both critical public policy challenges, and emergent human rights risks arising from corporate operations and supply chains;
- Coordinate strategies with relevant stakeholders that can help amplify investor efforts, and;
- Expand the current shareholder engagement agenda on human rights.

Participation in the Alliance will be open to all interested institutional investors both inside and outside the ICCR membership. The Alliance will be housed and staffed at ICCR’s headquarters in New York City.

***“ICCR members have been engaging companies on human rights and supply chain risks for more than four decades, focusing on the impacts of corporate practices on workers and communities,”*** said David Schilling, ICCR’s Senior Program Director for Human Rights. ***“In the face of policy and regulatory rollbacks that would forestall progress on these critical issues we know this work grows ever more urgent to the investment community and to impacted people and communities. We are excited by the prospect of partnering with other concerned investors and by the promise of the meaningful change this new alliance could bring to the field of business and human rights.”***

***“The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights make clear companies’ responsibility to respect human rights. We have seen through the work of the investor coalition that backs the UNGP Reporting Framework just how valuable the investor role can be in driving home that accountability,”***

said Caroline Rees, President and Co-founder of Shift. ***“The need and appetite for investor action on human rights is greater today than ever; this initiative of the ICCR will create a common platform to further leverage the power of investor voices and focus and coordinate efforts to drive positive change.”***

***“Two decades of progress on corporate accountability and human rights is on the line in Washington with huge implications for companies, communities and countries around the world,”*** said Bennett Freeman, former SVP, Sustainability Research and Policy, Calvert Investments. ***“Responsible investors have a vital moral and material stake in defending human rights and this new Investor Alliance will amplify their voice at a time of critical challenge.”***

Said Patrick Doherty of the Office of the New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli, ***“For decades, ICCR has been a leader in engaging companies on human rights risks. The campaign against apartheid in South Africa, the MacBride Principles in Northern Ireland and more recently, the Bangladesh Investor Initiative after the tragic collapse of Rana Plaza are just a few examples of collective investor actions that have brought meaningful improvements in corporate practices. The need for investor engagement on human rights today is more important than ever, and we welcome ICCR’s leadership in establishing this Investor Alliance for Human Rights.”***

Years of investor engagement on human rights has raised a variety of supply chain risks including forced labor and child labor, low wages, unethical recruitment and worker health and safety, as well as advocacy for government programs that safeguard human rights.

Said Julie Tanner of Christian Brothers Investment Services, Inc. (CBIS), ***“In the long-time coalition with our partners at ICCR, we have successfully engaged hundreds of companies globally on their human rights performance. Over the course of several decades, we have seen corporate acknowledgement of human rights risks grow into the adoption of policies and supplier codes – these often become recognized as industry best practice,”*** she noted. ***“This progress is due in no small part to investor influence. CBIS is eager to partner with other concerned investors to continue to advance human rights agendas at the corporate level, and to support policy initiatives that will promote greater human rights due diligence.”***

Anna Pot of APG Asset Management observed, ***“The outcomes of the Corporate Human Rights Benchmark pilot study are another signal that companies still have more work to do on respecting human rights. In order to be effective, more investors should use their leverage to engage companies in a dialogue about truly integrating respect for human rights in their strategies. We are grateful to ICCR for providing a mechanism that empowers more investors’ work in this area.”***

This initiative is supported by funding from Open Society Foundations and Humanity United.

### **About the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)**

Celebrating its 46th year, ICCR is the pioneer coalition of shareholder advocates who view the management of their investments as a catalyst for social change. Its 300 member organizations comprise faith communities, socially responsible asset managers, unions, pensions, NGOs and other socially responsible investors with combined assets of over \$400 billion. ICCR members engage hundreds of corporations annually in an effort to foster greater corporate accountability. [www.iccr.org](http://www.iccr.org)

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