

Russel Tribunal on Palestine
Pierre GALAND
115 rue Stevenin
1000 Brussels – Belgium

Le Secrétaire Général

Paris, 8th November 2010

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter.

Veolia Environnement, which operates in more than 70 countries, is a leading player in the environmental services sector. Veolia Transport, a subsidiary of Veolia Environnement, entered into the Jerusalem Light Rail Project in the aftermath of the Oslo Accord, when there was a prospect of a peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We believed then and we believe now, that this project will provide a real contribution to the improvement to the lives of all sections of the population. We have always made it very clear that unless there was to be equal access by all, we would withdraw from the project.

At all times we have sought to obey International Law and we have stated that if it were ruled by a properly constituted judicial court that we were in breach of International Law, then we would withdraw. We therefore did not oppose the decision by the French courts that they had jurisdiction and we always made it plain that we would abide by their decision. In the event the process has taken much longer than we had hoped and it has been Veolia who has been pressing the court to come to its consideration and verdict.

The changed circumstances in the region have also made managing this project ever more complex and polemical. At the same time, Veolia has been approached by a transport company and has decided to initiate the divestiture of its interests in the project, subject to fulfilling its contractual obligations.

In light of these circumstances, we do not find it appropriate to participate in your session at the present time. The story of these events illustrates just how difficult it is to deliver essential public services and thus to seek to contribute to a better living environment in disputed areas.

Yours sincerely,



Olivier Orsini
General Secretary