

Kiobel v. Royal Dutch Shell: Human Rights Law at the Crossroads



September 27, 2012 Georgetown University Law Center

Please join the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) on the eve of the Supreme Court argument in *Kiobel v. Royal Dutch Shell* for a panel discussion about the future of the **Alien Tort Statute (ATS)**, a key and vital tool for holding corporations, governments, and individuals accountable for international human rights violations.

Over the past three decades U.S. human rights organizations have successfully expanded the application of the ATS and have won key battles for justice in cases involving murder, rape, forced labor and other crimes against humanity.

More than 30 years ago, CCR filed claims in *Filártiga v. Peña-Irala* against a Paraguayan police officer for the torture and death of Joeli to Filártiga. When the victim's family located the officer in the U.S., CCR brought suit under the ATS, resulting in a ruling in favor of the family in a historic moment for human rights litigation that paved the way for the modern use of the ATS.

However, recent court rulings have threatened to turn back this critical progress. In September 2010, in *Kiobel v. Royal Dutch Shell*, a case against Shell for human rights abuses in Nigeria, the U.S. Court

of Appeals for the Second Circuit decided that corporations could not be sued under the ATS. This decision was appealed to the Supreme Court and argued last February. During the argument the Supreme Court justices questioned not just the application of the ATS to corporations but under what circumstances the ATS applies to any egregious human rights violation that takes place outside of the U.S. A week later they ordered the case to be re-argued on this question. **This re-argument is set for October 1, 2012.**

Co-sponsored by EarthRights International, the Center for Justice and Accountability, The Human Rights Institute at the Georgetown University Law Center, Human Rights First, and the International Corporate Accountability Roundtable, the panel will feature plaintiffs in ATS cases as well as human rights attorneys who have used the statute to seek justice in U.S. courts on behalf of foreign victims of human rights abuses.

Thursday, 9/27/2012 @ 12-2pm

Light refreshments 12:00; panel discussion 12:30-2
Hart Auditorium, Georgetown University Law Center
600 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Live webstream via event page: www.ccrjustice.org/events

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