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Type of Action:	Sense-of-the-Body
Status/Result:	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #33
2 Prescribing Conflict-Free University Contracts
3

4 ABSTRACT: This resolution urges Cornell to make verifiably conflict mineral-free purchasing decisions,
5 a measure that other international institutions have taken in order to curb militia violence in the eastern
6 region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
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8 **Sponsored by: Matthew Indimine '18**
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10 **Whereas**, the anti-genocide advocacy group *The Enough Project* defines “conflict minerals” as mined
11 gold, tin, tantalum, and tungsten that provides income to armed groups operating in the Democratic
12 Republic of the Congo, a country whose eastern region has been gripped by the deadliest conflict since
13 World War II;
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15 **Whereas**, several peer higher-education institutions, including Duke University, Stanford University,
16 Emory University, and the University of Pennsylvania have adopted measures to curb or eliminate their
17 investments in companies that use conflict minerals;
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19 **Whereas**, these conflict-free campus initiatives, as well as targeted financial actions undertaken by the
20 U.S. federal government and other institutions, have been widely credited with depriving Congo-based
21 militias of financial resources used to stage war crimes and other human rights abuses;
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23 **Whereas**, President Trump’s administration has alarmingly signaled its intent to reverse a 2010 federal
24 rule discouraging U.S.-based firms from purchasing conflict minerals, a reactionary measure that one
25 human rights advocate called “a gift to predatory armed groups;”
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27 **Whereas**, 101 Congo-based human rights organizations condemned the possible suspension of the federal
28 government’s Conflict Minerals Rule (Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and
29 Consumer Protection Act), warning that such a measure would reactivate “terrorist and mafia networks”
30 in their country’s eastern region that engage in illegal mineral extraction, human trafficking, widespread
31 sexual violence, child exploitation, and other human rights abuses;
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33 **Whereas**, in the midst of malfeasant government policies and human rights crises, universities have
34 historically played a critical role in defending and upholding the public good;
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36 **Whereas**, Cornell’s undergraduate student body has previously signaled its concern surrounding
37 atrocities in the eastern Congo with the passage of AY 2010-11 Resolution 2: Conflict Free Campus,
38 which called on the University to take decisive action to combat conflict minerals and favor verifiably
39 conflict-free products in its purchasing decisions;
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41 **Whereas**, student groups including the Association for International Human Rights, the Cornell
42 Organization for Labor Action, and Amnesty International at Cornell University have renewed these calls;
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44 **Whereas**, as shown in Appendix A, the University conducted an August 2011 assessment finding that it
45 holds investments in at least six firms given negative scores under RAISE Hope for Congo's conflict
46 mineral rating system;

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48 **Be it therefore resolved**, that Cornell University shall clarify whether or not it modified its purchasing
49 practices in light of this 2011 review;

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51 **Be it further resolved**, that with the offered help of organizers from anti-genocide advocacy group *The*
52 *Enough Project*, Cornell University shall develop a new independent survey that allows it to assess firms
53 not covered by existing rating systems;

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55 **Be it further resolved**, that Cornell University shall commit to annually surveying its vendors and
56 investments for conflict-free verification purposes, beginning FY 2018-2019;

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58 **Be it further resolved**, that Cornell University shall publicly release the results of said annual surveys;

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60 **Be it finally resolved**, that Cornell Information Technologies shall use these surveys to confirm
61 companies' conflict-free statuses before renewing or finalizing contracts with them.

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64 Respectfully Submitted,

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66 **Christopher Hanna '18**
67 *Co-facilitator, Amnesty International at Cornell University*

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69 **Helen Shanahan '18**
70 *Co-facilitator, Amnesty International at Cornell University*

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72 **Matthew Indimine '18**
73 *EVP, Student Assembly*

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75 **Paul Russell '19**
76 *Co-chair, Student Assembly Policy Research and Planning Committee*

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78 **Kyla Chasalow '20**
79 *Member, Amnesty International at Cornell University*

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81 **Zach Aleksandur de Stefan '18**
82 *Secretary, Amnesty International at Cornell University*

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84 **Kristine Lister '18**
85 *Urgent Action Coordinator, Amnesty International at Cornell University*

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90 Emma Lester '20

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94 *(Reviewed by: Executive Board, (6-0-0), 3/20/2017)*