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“The Public Eye Awards 2006” go to Chevron, Disney and Citigroup

On opening day of the World Economic Forum (WEF), The Berne Declaration and Pro Natura have for the second year selected the most *irresponsible* corporations. This year's award recipients are *Chevron Corp.*, *The Walt Disney Company* and *Citigroup Inc.* The first-ever “Positive Award” goes to the Mexican labor union SNRTE and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) Germanwatch and FIAN.

Over 20 domestic and foreign corporations made up the short list for the “Public Eye Awards 2006”. In addition, 10 NGOs from five continents applied for the first-ever “Positive Award.” (All nominations are available in english at www.publiceye.ch/nominierungen.) From these nominees, the “Public Eye” organizers chose four prize winners. Three of them are prime examples of corporations that demonstrate the shady side of purely profit-oriented globalization by their socially and environmentally *irresponsible* behavior. In contrast, the “Positive Award” honors a highly-effective NGO campaign against corporate delinquents guilty of environmental, social or tax transgressions.

The “Public Eye Award” in the category **Environment** goes to **Chevron Corp.** The U.S. oil concern, nominated by Amazon Watch, contaminated large areas of pristine rain forest in northern Ecuador for nearly 30 years (under its former name Texaco). To this day, it refuses to carry out a comprehensive cleanup of this Amazon region.

The winner in the category **Social Rights** is **The Walt Disney Company**. Southern Chinese suppliers to the entertainment giant are guilty of serious labor and human rights violations, thus tarnishing Disney's family-friendly image. The California-based media and toy manufacturer was nominated by Students and Scholars Against Corporate Misbehavior (SACOM), located in Hong Kong.

Citigroup Inc., nominated by the Tax Justice Network, is the winner in the category **Taxes**. Its subsidiary Citibank, one of the world's largest non-Swiss private bank, abets tax evasion by helping millionaires, potentates and corporations place their capital in tax havens and offshore firms, beyond the reach of national tax authorities.

The “Public Eye” organizers bestowed the first-ever “**Positive Award**” on **SNRTE**, **Germanwatch** and **FIAN** (Food First Information & Action Network). Working closely with the Mexican labor union SNRTE, the two German NGOs protested the unlawful closure of the Euzkadi factory of tire multinational Continental, located in El Salto, Mexico. Due to efficient NGO cooperation, professional lobbying and dialog with Continental, the campaign brought about the tire factory's reopening in February 2005. Since then, the workers are joint owners of the factory.

With the “Public Eye,” now in its seventh year, The Berne Declaration and Pro Natura have established a **counter discourse to the WEF**. Both organizations are convinced that critical discussion and direct pressure are necessary to bring corporations to treat people and nature with respect. Specifically, they demand legally-binding international regulations for corporate accountability.

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