



American Friends Service Committee

65 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 · (415) 400-9370 · investigate@afsc.org · www.afsc.org

November 25, 2015

Chair Jay Schenirer
Board of Directors
General Manager Michael Wiley

Sacramento Regional Transit
1400 29th Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

Dear Sacramento Regional Transit Board Chair Schenirer, Board members and Mr. Wiley,

You have received a request from your customers and constituents to not extend your current contract for private security with G4S. We have been monitoring this multinational corporation for several years now for severe violations of human rights, labor rights and governance codes in its U.S. operations and around the world. It is our strong recommendation for you to find a way to step away from all future business dealings with this company, as these constitute a serious reputational and controversy liability, especially for a public service authority such as the Sacramento Regional Transit.

In this letter we would like to call to your attention some of this corporation's most publicized recent scandals, and some of the responses of other public institutions around the world. For a detailed report please refer to our online investment screening tool, investigate.afsc.org/company/g4s-plc, where G4S is listed among the 5 worst prison profiteers in the country.

Abuse in private prisons:

G4S runs youth detention facilities across the U.S., the majority of these facilities (28) are in Florida, where there have been consistent reports of sexual abuse, use of excessive force, recurring riots, and numerous resulting lawsuits against the company. In July of this year, a Florida grand jury called G4S-run facilities a "disgrace."

Several of the company's UK prison facilities were investigated for improper management, including health care provision, suicide prevention and human rights protection, costing the company the contract to operate Wolds prison.

In a South African G4S facility, hundreds of guards were dismissed following a strike, which resulted in a series of inmate revolts and hostage taking, and the temporary taking over of the prison back by the state. A year-long investigation has uncovered a practice of G4S security teams using electric shocks and forcibly administering injections of antipsychotic drugs to subdue inmates. The investigation has exposed a cover up of several prisoner

deaths following such torture, and prompted a recent suit by 43 prisoners against the company for torture.

Its track record of abuse and mismanagement in operating private prisons have positioned G4S as one of the main targets of movements against mass incarceration and the for-profit prison industry. As Democratic presidential candidates are announcing their rejection of campaign contributions from such companies, the national condemnation of the prison industry is growing, with the United Methodist Church, the Gates Foundation, the City of Portland and several prominent universities divesting from G4S.

Immigration and deportations scandals:

Similarly, G4S is in the center of national attention to immigrant rights and immigration reform, and the target of countless grassroots actions against forced deportations. Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection has outsourced all transportation services to G4S since 2006. G4S transports detainees to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facilities throughout the country, temporarily detains them to await processing and forcibly deports them across the U.S./Mexico border. A similar contract for all UK deportation was withdrawn from G4S following the 2010-2012 investigation into the death of Jimmy Mubenga at the hands of G4S guards during his deportation. In February 2014 Australia ended its contract with G4S after one person died following a riot in Manus Island immigration detention center.

Violations of international law and the rights of children:

G4S provides security systems to Israeli prisons in which Palestinian detainees are held without charges for months, even years. Human rights organizations have collected evidence showing that Palestinian prisoners are regularly subjected to torture in these facilities. The transfer of Palestinian prisoners to Israel, the occupying power's territory, is a war crime according to the Fourth Geneva Convention.

One of these facilities the Ofer prison for Palestinian prisoners, located in the occupied West Bank. The military compound includes a military court which tries detainees from the West Bank on a daily basis, including a military courtroom dedicated to Palestinian children. The conviction rate for Palestinians in Israeli military courts is 99.74%. Between 2005-2010, 835 Palestinian minors were accused of stone-throwing in Israeli military courts, only one was acquitted. As of June 2015, 93 children were reportedly held in Ofer military prison. Currently, stone throwers may be sentenced to 10-20 years in Israeli prisons.

The company also provides technologies to the Israeli settler police headquarters, in the highly contested E-1 compound, and provides security services in illegal Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank. In October 2012, The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories has listed G4S as one of the main companies profiting from Israeli settlements and called on the UN General Assembly and civil society to take action against such businesses.

Loss of contracts and reputation:

A series of public fiascos in recent years have cost the company some of its major contracts. Most notably, the company's failure to provide security to the 2012 Olympics; and the 2013 exposure of a consistent fraudulent overcharging in the U.K. for electronic monitoring services by false claims (at times charging the government for dead prisoners or prisoners out of the country). Most recently, the company was made to sell its U.S. Government Solutions division, after charges of complicity in human rights violations in the Guantánamo Bay U.S. Naval Base.

In addition to divestment resolutions by universities and churches, a series of public institutions, including the European Parliament and the U.K. Labour party, Durham County in North Carolina, about two dozen universities and several trade unions, have decided to discontinue contracts with the company. Most notably, the University of Bergen has ruled in November 2013 that hiring G4S would cause damage to the university's reputation worth 2.5 million Norwegian krone (\$420,000). By monetizing the reputational damage, the university was able to reject the company's cheapest bid to their security contract.

Once challenged on this issue, you have no choice but to take a stance. If you choose to extend the contract with G4S for the supply of security services, knowing all that you know today about its record of disregard to human life and dignity, you would be stating your support of this corporation and your trust in its practices. As a public authority charged with providing services to a highly diverse population, you need to assess the social and ethical implications of such a decision. We hope that you would consider ways to cut all ties to this controversial corporation, and join the many institutions around the world that have called upon this company to change its harmful practices.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season,

Dalit Baum

Director, Economic Activism
The American Friends Service Committee
San Francisco, CA