

United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations

Environment Series No. 2

Climate Change and Transnational Corporations

Analysis and Trends



United Nations New York, 1992

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ST/CTC/112

UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATION

Sales No. E.92.II.A.7

ISBN 92-1-104385-9

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Preface

In Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/25, the Council requested an analytic study of the main sectors of activity that have adverse effects on environmental preservation and the factors that determine the allocation of activities between developed and developing countries. The present report, entitled *Climate Change and Transnational Corporations: Analysis and Trends*, is in response to that request.

The problem of global warming and the dangers it presents to global survival are being given high priority by the United Nations. Discussions are under way leading to a convention on global climate change under the auspices of United Nations intergovernmental bodies. The study was designed as a contribution to that process. It focuses on six transnational energy-producing and energy-consuming industrial sectors, in which corporate practices have a direct and major impact on the problems associated with global climate change. The sectors are fossil fuel production, transportation, electricity-generation, energy-intensive metals production, chlorofluorocarbons and other ozone-depleting chemicals, and inorganic nitrogen fertilizers.

The study explores the relative differential impacts between industrialized and developing countries of each sector, and asks how each sector would have to be restructured in order to limit global climate change and ozone depletion. It concludes that major changes in the technical processes and investment patterns of the transnational corporations in those sectors would be necessary if catastrophic environmental changes are to be avoided.

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Peter Hansen

Executive Director

New York, December 1991

United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations

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