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### **Welcome address by Silvie Lang, Berne Declaration**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Berne Declaration and Greenpeace, I would like to welcome you to the press conference of the 2014 Public Eye Awards and thank you all for coming. You will find the program of this press conference in your press kit. After the press conference, the speakers and the Public Eye Awards team will be available for interviews. Lilla Lukacs and Mathias Schlegel from Greenpeace will be coordinating the interviews. Pre-arranged interviews will have preference, but you are all more than welcome to stay and arrange an interview.

Before we give the floor to our speakers and announce the winners of the Public Eye People's and the Public Eye Jury Award, I would like to look back on the beginnings of the Public Eye, and recapitulate why 15 years later – sadly – there is still a need for campaigns like ours that demand corporate accountability.

It's been 15 years since we first held the Public Eye here in Davos. In the year 2000, less than two months after the «battle of Seattle» against the World Trade Organization, the first «Public Eye on Davos» took place. The aim was to reflect critically on the World Economic Forum and to discuss a socially and environmentally more sustainable world economy as opposed to the neoliberal politics of globalization propagated by the participants of the WEF.

Since then, some things have changed; others have remained the same. While business opportunities for global corporations have continued to increase and multinationals have become even more powerful, corporate accountability still hasn't kept pace with this development. Voluntary corporate efforts to respect human rights and the environment are blooming. However, as you will later see in the speeches, especially the contribution of labor rights activist Kalpona Akter, many face exploitation and repression in their struggles for justice. Standing up against powerful corporations is a tough fight that often takes place in the absence of legally binding measures that oblige companies to respect human rights and the environment. This gap makes it very hard for people around the world to claim their rights and seek the justice they are entitled to.

The Public Eye Awards aim to demonstrate the necessity of effective and legally binding measures on a national and international level to ensure corporations are held accountable for their wrong-doings. We provide a platform to publicly criticize cases of human and labor rights violations, environmental destruction and corruption. The date and location of the Public Eye Awards are set deliberately to coincide with the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum. Those hiding behind closed doors in Davos - allegedly to improve the state of the world - often contribute to these irresponsible practices themselves. We are here to remind the corporate world that the social and environmental consequences of their business activities affect not only people and the environment, but also the reputation of their company.

Since 2005 when we started with the awards concept, 21 companies have received a Public Eye Award. Today, two additional companies will have the dubious honor of calling themselves Public Eye Award winners. But before we come to the more "glamorous" part of this press conference, we would like to give the floor to our speakers who will address topics as diverse yet interrelated as the Economics of Evil, the State of Corporate Power or the consequences of irresponsible business practices on people all around the world.