



Press Release

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Subject: We call on the UK Government to Declare a Moratorium on all Fracking Operations until a Transparent and Independent Human Rights Impact Assessment has been Completed

Bianca Jagger, Founder and Chair of The Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation (BJHRF), will release tomorrow a report calling on the UK government to investigate the human rights impact of fracking before authorising any exploratory or extractive fracking operations. The report recommends a moratorium on all fracking operations until a transparent, independent and publically funded Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) has been undertaken and placed in the public domain.

Bianca Jagger stated: “The UK government is promoting a fracking agenda despite the well documented health and environmental impacts experienced in the US and elsewhere. Since they have failed to demonstrate any concern for the human rights of ordinary citizens, the BJHRF decided to commission the report: *A Human Rights Assessment of Hydraulic Fracturing and Other Unconventional Gas Development in the United Kingdom.*”

The main body of the Report focuses on the most direct sources of human rights liability for the current UK Government. Most fundamentally:

The UK is legally bound to respect and protect human rights, both under the auspices of its own Human Rights Act 1998 [HRA], and of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms 1950 (ECHR). The UK is also bound to respect international human rights law — which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Bianca Jagger goes on to say: “The UK Government has given the green light to shale gas companies for fracking operations throughout the United Kingdom. They are rushing through changes to the law of trespass to speed up the ability of shale gas companies to frack under people’s homes without their consent. The re-writing of the law is being introduced despite widespread public concern about the health and environmental impact of fracking and in the face of overwhelming public resistance from ordinary people. The Infrastructure Bill is a flagrant violation of our basic human rights and of our democratic process”

The human rights identified in the report as being under threat from fracking developments include the **rights to life and security of person, to water and health, to respect for home and private life and to public participation in the decision making processes for environmental matters, as well as the rights of future generations and the human rights dimensions of climate change.**

Addressing the current UK Government’s strong commitment to a pro-fracking stance, the report underscores the fact that, to date, *‘there has been virtually no consideration at the policy level of the human rights dimensions of fracking’.*

Author quotations

‘The failure of the government to produce a full, industry-independent and evidence based analysis of the human rights implications of fracking developments is a serious error, one that we hope will soon be remedied.’

Dr Damien Short, Reader in Human Rights, Director of the Human Rights Consortium, School of Advanced Study, University of London.

‘Fracking represents an excellent example of the importance of human rights protection to the family life and property of ordinary people in the UK.’

Professor Karen Morrow, professor of Environmental Law, Swansea University, core team member #GNHRE:

‘Our hope is that this report will motivate the UK Government to meet its moral duty to ordinary people as well as its legally binding human rights obligations.’

Tom Kerns, Director of Environment and Human Rights Advisory, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Seattle Community College.

‘Our government’s approach to fracking has ignored the widely and publicly expressed democratic wishes of the vast majority of ordinary people. Our government owes the British people a better hearing and more respect than it has shown them thus far and should place a moratorium on fracking until important human rights dimensions of the issue have been given the benefit of a full, industry-independent and properly funded impact assessment’.

Dr Anna Grear, Director of the #GNHRE, Reader in Law, Cardiff Law School, UK and Adjunct Associate Professor of Law, University of Waikato, New Zealand.