A Saharawi woman waving a Polisario-Saharawi flag at the Smora Saharawi refugee camp, near Western Sahara’s border.

Photo credit: FAROUK BATICHE/AFP/Getty Images
WHO ELSE PROFITS

The Scope of European and Multinational Business in the Occupied Territories

This report is based on publicly available information, from news media, NGOs, national governments and corporate statements. Though we have taken efforts to verify the accuracy of the information, we are not responsible for, and cannot vouch, for the accuracy of the sources cited here. Nothing in this report should be construed as expressing a legal opinion about the actions of any company. Nor should it be construed as endorsing or opposing any of the corporate activities discussed herein.

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INTRODUCTION

On March 24, 2016, the UN General Assembly Human Rights Council (UNHRC), at its 31st session, adopted resolution 31/36, which instructed the High Commissioner for human rights to prepare a “database” of certain business enterprises. The database will focus on “business enterprises [that] have directly and indirectly, enabled, facilitated and profited from the construction and growth of the settlements.” According to a report by the high commissioner, 206 companies have been “screened” for inclusion in the list so far, with most based in Israel, followed by the United States and several European countries. While publication of the list, including the companies’ names, has been delayed due to what the high commissioner describes as “resource” constraints, it is still expected imminently.

The UNHRC database is remarkable in two ways. First, the UNHRC focuses on human rights abuses by governments, not private actors. Making blacklists of businesses is absolutely unprecedented for the UNHRC. Such an effort naturally fuels—and cannot be seen in isolation from—various campaigns, primarily by European government–backed organizations, calling for commercial boycotts of such businesses. The clear goal of the Council in producing such a list is to create negative reputational consequences for the listed companies, and ultimately to trigger sanctions against targeted companies through subsequent action by the Security Council or national governments.

Second, while the UNHRC’s own mandate calls for it to concern itself with human rights “for all people,” the current “research” program is focused only on companies with links to Israel, and particularly areas of the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) that under the Oslo Accords are under full Israeli civil administration. But as this series of *Who Else Profits* reports demonstrates, business activity in what the UN regards as occupied territories is a worldwide phenomenon. Every situation of prolonged belligerent occupation in the world involves widespread “settlement” activity—a non-technical term to refer generally to the migration of civilians from the occupying power into the territory. In all of these occupations, business enterprises, including third-country firms, play a major economic role. Many of these settlement enterprises have resulted in the large-scale ethnic cleansing or displacement of the occupied population or subjected it to widespread and massive human rights violations that have been amply documented.

If business activity that “facilitates” or “profits” from settlement activity raises human rights issues, then the Commission’s current research program is unjustifiably narrow in its scope, and fails to capture the full context and magnitude of business activities that support settlement enterprises in occupied territories. The narrow focus of the report’s mandate undermines both the legal and practical value of the resulting database. It is also likely to produce consequences both unexpected and undesired by the Council and member states.
There is a good reason the Council, and human rights groups, have ignored the activities documented herein: legitimate business does not become illegal when it occurs in a contested political or territorial situation, or even supports the occupiers’ control. Thus the UNHRC’s Israel database is not merely an example of double standards—of unevenly enforcing or applying existing rules. Rather, it is an unjustified and illegitimate invention of entirely new rules that apply solely to the Jewish State.

***

This report, the second in a series, is designed to put the HRC’s “database” project in a global perspective. It examines business activity in support of settlement enterprises in occupied territories around the world. This study reveals that such business is ubiquitous and involves some of the world’s largest industrial, financial services, transport, and other major publicly traded companies. Such companies include Coca Cola, Air France, Priceline Group, Ford Motor Company, Airbnb, Zurich Insurance Group, Danske Bank, ENEL, and BNP Paribas SA, to take just a few examples.

As a matter of human rights, the Council’s focus on Israel is difficult to understand. There are numerous territories around the world currently under belligerent occupation, where the occupying power has allowed or facilitated the movement of settlers into the occupied territory. In all these cases, this is done over the vigorous objection of the occupied party and is at odds with its sovereignty or self-determination.

Among the most salient examples are Morocco’s occupation of Western Sahara and Turkey’s of northern Cyprus. Both of these have seen massive government-backed settlement enterprises that dwarf anything in the West Bank. The majority of the population in these territories now consists of settlers, fundamentally undermining the possibility of self-determination or a political solution. There are also settlers in Armenian-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and the Occupied Ukrainian Territories. In all these cases, foreign companies actively support the various settlement enterprises. These activities include extracting natural resources from the territories, providing infrastructure support to the occupying power, and in general, making the settlement enterprises more economically viable.

While the UNHRC’s own mandate calls for it to concern itself with human rights “for all people,” the current “research” program is focused only on companies with links to Israel.
There is a clear reason why the extensive involvement of multinational corporations in situations of occupation and settlements worldwide has not led to any protest or even discussion by the UNHRC or human rights NGOs: it is in fact entirely legal and consistent with human rights norms.

The corporations’ home countries have taken no steps to stop this—indeed, state-owned companies are often involved in such business activity. **Nor has this world-wide business activity ever been criticized by the Human Rights Council.** Indeed, the companies involved have in many cases received explicit advice from international law experts, and even their home countries’ foreign ministries, that doing business under the jurisdiction of an occupying power that denies people self-determination is not a violation of international law or human rights. International financial institutions, such as the World Bank, International Finance Corporation, and numerous national and international development banks, have extended loans of hundreds of millions and billions of dollars to banks and corporations doing business in occupied territories around the world.

A long line of imposing authorities have held that companies’ doing business in occupied territories does not raise human rights issues.6 This was the conclusion of the UN’s own legal advisor in a 2002 memo on Western Sahara,7 and of recent rulings by the UK Supreme Court and an important French appellate court in cases concerning the West Bank.8 Moreover, the Fourth Geneva Convention clearly authorizes the occupying power to do business in the territory it controls and gives the occupied people no veto over this.9

Yet the UNHRC’s pending database is premised on the notion that such companies must somehow be shamed or sanctioned. This database project fundamentally discredits the United Nations Human Rights Council by demonstrating that it does not treat people equally by virtue of their common humanity. If businesses involved in settlement enterprises are a human rights problem, certainly companies working in Israeli-controlled areas should not be immune from scrutiny. If it is a human rights problem, however, the Council has no basis to ignore the problem wherever it appears in the world—except Israel.

**METHODOLOGY**

The UNHRC’s database will focus on “business activities and related issues that raise particular human rights violations concerns.” The activities identified by the Council cover any kind of activity under Israeli auspices—from providing “construction equipment,” to “banking and financial operations,” to the “use of natural resources,” all in the vague context of “maintaining” settlements.10 To be clear, no physical link to Jewish civilian communities is required for inclusion in the blacklist: the UNHRC list includes “activities that may not be geographically connected to settlements, but form part of the processes that ‘enable and support the establishment, expansion and maintenance of Israeli residential communities beyond the Green Line’”—a standard vague enough to sweep in much of Israeli industry.11 This definition is legally baseless, and entirely untethered to the Fourth Geneva Convention’s
prohibition on “deporting or transferring” population into an occupied territory, which is the basis of the settlement controversy.12

The Council’s methodology is vastly indeterminate and overbroad, but for purposes of consistency, this report uses the same standard. However, we focus on enterprises that work directly with the occupying power. The information here comes exclusively from publicly available sources, such as news articles, corporate statements, and NGO and governmental reports. Indeed, many of these companies proudly publicize their settlement-related operations on their websites. This is because they have nothing to hide: such business activity is only problematic in the Israeli context.

This second Who Else Profits report, like its predecessor, is far from exhaustive, because the scope of corporate activity in occupied territories is so broad. For reasons of space and resources, it is merely a suggestive sampling of the breadth and depth of such activity. But the 37 companies listed here are just the tip of the iceberg. The focus in this report is mostly on third-country firms—those not based in the occupying power. This second report also focuses on companies thought to be included in the UNHRC blacklist. Many of these companies are active in occupied territories around the world. Under the UNHRC’s approach, they can continue all these activities and not be blacklisted, so long as they end their Israeli activities.

A PRECEDENT THAT WILL BE USED IN NON-ISRAELI CONTEXTS

While the Council may wish to confine its discussion to Israel, it will not stay confined. National governments and activists concerned with the various occupied territories will demand that companies doing business in them receive the same treatment as the ones in the UNHRC database. They will pursue this goal in courts, in shareholder meetings, and before the UNHRC itself. Many countries, including those that did not oppose resolution 31/36, will find their executives, their businesses, and their governments ensnared. The beginnings of this process can already be seen in several cases brought by the Fronte Polisario against the European Commission, where the latter was forced by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) to apply the
standards it developed in an “Israel only” context to other situations. The consequences of this litigation have already disrupted the European Union’s trade with Morocco. The Council’s database will only give further fuel to the misguided legal theories behind this litigation and further compromise the Commission’s, and the EU’s, trade prospects.

The governments of Azerbaijan and Ukraine have also become increasingly active in protesting business activity in their occupied territories. The publication of the database, and any subsequent action by the UN or member states based on it, will serve as a precedent that these countries will use in litigation and diplomatic pressure against many of the companies listed here. Law knows no boundaries. Precedents will be used outside the contexts in which they were established. The ECJ proceedings and other cases show courts will not confine themselves to the political limits set by the UNHRC. This report gives a glimpse of the economic harm that will be caused when the UNHRC’s “Israel rule” spills out into the larger world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• UNHRC members, and other countries, must demand that publication of the database be delayed indefinitely, until the Council devises a way to prepare such a report that is consistent with the standards it applies worldwide.

• If the database is published, national governments must make clear that they do not see it as having any legal consequences for affected companies.

• Nations that do not wish to see the UNHRC’s Israel-specific rules regarding business in disputed territories spill over and infect generally-applicable international law must make it clear that the database and principles behind it do not reflect international law.

• Publication of the database would constitute a marked aggravation of the anti-Israel policy that led the U.S. to leave the Council. It would be a strong reason for the U.S. to not reconsider that decision. Israel should also clarify its position regarding the Council by formally cutting all ties.
BUSINESS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

COMPANIES DOING BUSINESS IN THE TERRITORIES

OCCUPYING COUNTRIES

OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
1

WESTERN SAHARA
Western Sahara (or the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, SADR) is located in northwest Africa between Morocco and Mauritania. From the late 19th century onward, Western Sahara was a Spanish colony. As Spain was preparing to decolonize it in the early 1970s, Morocco laid claim to it. However, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concluded, in an advisory opinion, that Rabat had no sovereign rights in Western Sahara, and that the indigenous had a right to self-determination. In response to the ICJ opinion, Morocco’s King Hassan II organized a Green March—a massive civilian and military invasion of the territory on November 6, 1974. The Moroccan government took administrative control of the territory and annexed most of it as the “Southern Provinces” of Morocco in 1976. King Hassan, claiming the consent of the Saharawi people, decided to partition Western Sahara between Morocco and Mauritania. The Polisario Front, a Saharawi national movement, declared Western Sahara’s independence later that same day and began staging attacks against the occupying force. Since then, dozens of countries have recognized the Polisario’s proclaimed state, the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, as an independent sovereign nation. Morocco’s status as a belligerent occupier has been emphasized by many international bodies and courts. In 1979, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 34/37, declaring Morocco an occupying power and reaffirming the Saharawi’s right to self-determination. The GA continued to pass similarly worded resolutions once a year for 10 years thereafter. In addition, the UN secretary-general issued a report calling for a settlement plan that allowed the people of Western Sahara to exercise “their right to self-determination.” More recently, the European Court of Justice affirmed Morocco’s status as an occupier and dismissed its claim to legal rights over the territory. A UK court also recently concluded that Morocco is an occupying power in Western Sahara, and the same conclusion was reached this year by the European Commission’s advocate general. In the early 1980s, Morocco began to construct a massive wall berm around the areas of Western Sahara it controlled, stranding tens of thousands of Saharawi in refugee camps in the desert, on the Algerian border. It also commenced one of the world’s most extensive settlement projects. Since its invasion in 1976, “Moroccanization” of the Western Saharan population has been official Moroccan public policy. Over the past 40 years, the Moroccan government has spent many billions of dollars on Western Sahara’s basic infrastructure, building airports, harbors, roads, and electricity plants. The government has also offered higher salaries to incentivize settlers to move to Western Sahara, and salaries in the occupied territory are double salaries in Rabat. Jobs in the lucrative state-controlled extractive industries go primarily to Moroccans settlers.
combination of subsidies, generous incentives, and intensive government spending has resulted in an influx, according to various past indications, of at least 200,000-300,000 Moroccan settlers into the territory. The results have been dramatic: Moroccan settlers now clearly outnumber indigenous Saharawi, with fatal effects for the latter’s self-determination. Indeed, recent reports suggest that Moroccan settlers in Western Sahara outnumber the Saharawi by two to one.

The Moroccan presence in Western Sahara is widely described as one of the world’s most repressive. The situation of the over 100,000 Saharawi living in desert refugee camps is bleak. As one recent account put it:

> For those of us who have actually been to Western Sahara, there is no question that it is an occupation. Any verbal or visual expression of support for self-determination is savagely suppressed. Even calls for social and economic justice can be dangerous. The young sociologist Brahim Saika, a leader of a movement of unemployed Saharawi professionals demanding greater economic justice, was tortured to death while in Moroccan detention in April 2016. Freedom House has ranked Western Sahara as among the dozen least free nations in the world. Indeed, of the more than 70 countries I have visited — including Iraq under Saddam Hussein and Indonesia under Suharto — Western Sahara is the most repressive police state I have ever seen.

While the Saharawi inhabitants of the territory are deeply impoverished, it is rich in various natural resources, with phosphate mining and fishing constituting its principal industries. Morocco has in recent decades begun to aggressively capitalize on the natural resources of its occupied territory. It has also developed an ambitious plan for investing in energy projects in the territory, especially solar and wind power. There are also significant oil exploration projects underway. Morocco has undertaken many of these projects in partnership with foreign firms, in particular those from the European Union, Morocco’s largest trading partner.

Indeed, the EU has entered into controversial treaties with Rabat allowing the EU preferential access to trade and natural resources in the occupied territory. While the European Court of Justice has in recent years cast doubt on the validity of these treaties, the EU has doubled down and made clear its ongoing intention to include the occupied territory in its agreements with Morocco.

In the coming decade, Morocco says it will invest $7 billion developing its control over the territory through new rail, highway, and air-transport facilities, as well as a new seaport, stadium, government buildings, and more. Indeed, international law firms have advised their clients that doing business with Morocco in the territory is not illegal. They have instead lauded its economic opportunities, with one noting that “the territory’s greenfield potential and Morocco’s support backed by a positive track record for infrastructure and economic development are factors leading more foreign companies to consider investment or operation in the Western Sahara and within the wider region.”

The Polisario Front and other Saharawi representatives have consistently opposed the involvement of international firms as a violation of international law and a form of plunder. A coalition of NGOs called Western Sahara Resource Watch actively documents what it calls the “plunder” of Saharawi resources by Moroccan and foreign firms. Nonetheless, while a few northern European governments have signaled disapproval of such trade, it has never been blocked, sanctioned, or otherwise penalized.
The Coca-Cola Company (TCCC) is the world’s largest beverage company, a major multinational corporation and the owner of some of the world’s most valuable and recognizable brands, led by Coca-Cola. It is reportedly on the list of Israeli companies being compiled by the UNHRC due to its Israel operations.35

Coca Cola company operates in Morocco via three territorial bottler-licensees: Société des Boissons Gazeuses du Souss (SBGS), which operates from Agadir to the south, openly including Western Sahara; Nord Africa Bottling Company (NABC), which operates in central Atlantic Morocco (including Marrakesh and Rabat); and Atlas Bottling Company (ABC), which operates in the Mediterranean and eastern regions.36

In Western Sahara, SBGS operates at least four logistical centers—in Laayoune, Smara, Dakhla, and Boujdour. The Coca-Cola Company’s Casablanca office is actively involved in planning and advancing business in the SBGS licensee’s Western Sahara operations and involves them in promotions and corporate training.37
THE COCA-COLA COMPANY

COCA COLA MOROCCO WEBSITE
DESCRIPTION OF COCA COLA BOTTLERS’ SYSTEM IN THE COUNTRY.
Government Pension Fund Global (GPFG) is Norway’s sovereign wealth fund, which receives capital from the government’s petroleum revenues. According to most accounts, GPFG is the world’s largest sovereign wealth fund, with more than $1 trillion under management. The fund’s activities and investments are determined by the Norwegian government.
Norges Bank is Norway’s central bank, whose board of governors is appointed by the Norwegian government and confirmed by the king of Norway—or as the official Norwegian terminology puts it, appointed by the King in Council.42

Norges Bank Investment Management (NBIM) is Norges Bank’s investment management division and is responsible for managing and investing the Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global.

In 2014, NBIM Government Pension Fund Global reportedly began its plan of investing at least $200 million in Moroccan economy.43 In 2016-17, it owned shares in numerous Moroccan and international companies doing business in Western Sahara:

- **Société d’Exploitation des Ports SA**, commercially known as Marsa Maroc.44 Morocco’s state-controlled marine services and ports operating company. At the beginning of this period, Norges Bank held 1.72 percent of ownership and voting rights directly, and by the end, 1.22 percent. Marsa Maroc operates the ports of Laayoune and Dakhla, main commercial gateways to Western Sahara. In 2017 alone, NBIM received direct dividends estimated at between $1 to $2 million from its Marsa Maroc direct shareholdings.45 The estimate for 2016 is similar.46

- **Norges Bank-NBIM** also owned indirect interests in Marsa Maroc via its shareholdings in Wafa Assurance SA, which is one of three core non-government shareholders, with 3.33 percent. Norges Bank-NBIM is Wafa Assurance’s biggest international shareholder, with 0.086 percent in direct shareholding and an even greater financial interest via NBIM’s holdings in Attijariwafa Bank, Wafa Assurance SA’s parent company.47

- **Compagnie de Transports au Maroc (CTM)**, which provides Moroccan bus service throughout Western Sahara. NBIM is the fourth-largest shareholder, according to the last available annual report (2016). Its partners are Moroccan holding companies with multiple industrial interests in Westerns Sahara.48

- **Attijariwafa Bank**, in which NBIM Government Pension Fund Global holds a 0.14 percent stake (valued at $11,248,568). This is a major Moroccan bank, with branches in Dakhla, Laayoune, and other cities. Attijariwafa Bank controls other financial, credit, and insurance industry companies, such as Wafa and Wafasalaf, which are a driving force behind Moroccan business in Western Sahara.49
Norges Bank has an additional direct stake of 0.11 percent in Wafa Insurance.

- **BMCE Bank**, in which NBIM Government Pension Fund Global holds a 0.26 percent stake (valued at $10,761,132), and which has multiple branches in Western Sahara. The bank is actively leading development of international business in the territory and recently signed a memorandum on the topic with the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Morocco.50

Norges Bank also controls 1.67 percent of shares in Sweden’s industrial and construction equipment conglomerate Atlas Copco,51 which supplies the Moroccan phosphates extractor Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP) with mining and drilling equipment.
Priceline Group is among the world’s top online booking and travel industry service providers. The group owns such globally known brands as Booking.com, Priceline.com, Agoda.com, KAYAK, Rentalcars.com, and OpenTable. Its inclusion of locations in the West Bank on its platforms has reportedly lead to its targeting by the UNHRC.53

Priceline’s websites market tourist facilities in Western Sahara. For example, Booking.com allows users to reserve hotel rooms in Laayoune. Similarly, Priceline.com features tourist facilities in the occupied territories of Western Sahara.54
TripAdvisor is one of the biggest travel websites in the world. By the end of 2016, the company was reporting 390 million monthly unique users. It is reportedly one of the companies being targeted by the UNHRC for its Israel-related activities.

On the site, one can book flights from Europe to the Moroccan-occupied Western Saharan city of Dakhla. The site also suggests combination flight/hotel deals in Dakhla or other cities in “South Morocco.”

TRIPADVISOR.COM SUGGESTIONS FOR COMBINATIONS ON FLIGHTS AND HOTELS FROM GENEVA TO DAKHLA, MOROCCO.
TRIPADVISOR.COM SUGGESTIONS FOR COMBINATIONS ON FLIGHTS AND HOTELS FROM GENEVA TO DAKHLA, MOROCCO.
Thyssenkrupp is a major German-based industrial conglomerate operating in many business areas, including automotive and machinery component technology, elevators, materials services, and steel. The Alfred Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation, a German philanthropic foundation, owns 23.3 percent of Thyssenkrupp shares.

In 2016, Thyssenkrupp began construction of a large-scale cement plant in Laayoune, Western Sahara. The construction was ordered by Anwar Développement and Atlantic Ciment, fully owned subsidiaries of Anouar Invest, a Moroccan holding company active in the food, trading, distribution, real estate, and construction materials industries. The new plant is designed to have a production capacity of 500,000 tons of cement per year. Both the president and commercial director of Thyssenkrupp - ThyssenKrupp Industrial Solutions (Germany - France) were present at the signing of the contract in Morocco.

In this context, it is worth noting that LafargeHolcim, major global company, just finished construction of a new cement plant near Laayoune and began operations.

The Western Sahara operation is part of extensive Thyssenkrupp ties to Morocco, including local subsidiaries. Thyssenkrupp Industrial Solutions Maroc SARL and Thyssenkrupp Elevator Maroc S.A.R.L. Thyssenkrupp also has multiple megaprojects, such as a novel aerospace manufacturing facility near Casablanca and production-line supply agreements with LafargeHolcim, among others.

Par Imane AZHI

THYSSENKRUPP-ANOUAR INVEST AGREEMENT SIGNING CEREMONY.
Enel Group is an Italian-based multinational energy company and one of the world’s leading operators in integrated electricity and gas. With operations in 34 countries across five continents, it has almost 71 million end users around the world. The government of Italy is the largest shareholder.

Enel Group was part of the consortium with Siemens that won a multibillion-dollar bid to develop and build five new wind power projects in Morocco. Two are to be located in Western Sahara; one will be in Tiskrad, Laayoune (300 megawatts), and another near Boujdour (100 megawatts). Enel is participating in these projects through its subsidiaries, Endesa, in which it owns 70 percent of the shares, and Enel Green Power. Endesa is the largest electric utility company in Spain and the second largest in Portugal. Enel Green Power is the Enel Group company “devoted to the development and management of the Group’s renewables generation operations.” Five international consortiums reached final bids stage, and many more participated at earlier stages.

As the Enel website states, Endesa “has been assigned the right to develop, design, fund, build, manage and maintain five wind power projects in Morocco.” Thus, a company in which the Italian government is the largest shareholder characterizes its operations in Western Sahara as being in “Morocco.”
We produce electricity in Morocco and South Africa, where in 2015 we won the award of “Investor of the year” for our various projects in the renewable energy sector. This development will continue in other countries in Africa and Asia, with operations already up and running in India and Indonesia.

By combining our unique scale and reach with new opportunities in a more connected world, we are shaping the future of energy.

The financial and economic data reported on this page has been updated with the information and the consolidated financial results as of 31/03/2018.

Enel worldwide

Morocco

The Enel Group manages a thermoelectric plant in Morocco (with Siemens and the domestic company ONEEL), which is the first combination cycle in the country and the first in Africa to receive ISO 14001 and ISO 90001 certification. We won the rights (with Nareva Holding and Siemens Wind Power) to construct a further five wind farms.

Enel’s presence in the country: Energie Electrique de Tahaddert (through Endesa), Enel Green Power
Total installed capacity (MW): 584

ENDESA
ENEL GREEN POWER

ENEL CORPORATE DESCRIPTION OF ITS BUSINESS PROJECTS IN MOROCCO.
INWI is one of Morocco’s three major mobile telecommunications providers. It has at least seven technical offices in what Morocco calls the Southern regions, i.e., Western Sahara.

INWI was the second mobile provider to offer 4G coverage in Morocco, right after Orange subsidiary Meditel (now Orange Maroc). At the same time, INWI supplied the advanced telecommunications connection to Western Sahara’s Laayoune, integrating it with Morocco’s telecom network.
INWI is two-thirds owned by SNI, the Moroccan royal family’s private holding company.82 Since 2009, Zain Group and Al Ajial Holding have together held a 31 percent stake in INWI as part of a 50-50 partnership. Zain Group, based in Kuwait, is one of the Middle East’s largest telecoms, while Al Ajial Holding is the investment company of Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) designated for investments in Morocco’s economy.83 KIA, the managing arm for Kuwait’s sovereign wealth fund, also directly holds almost 25 percent of Zain Group.

The Al Kharafi family, one of the world’s richest according to Forbes, along with its Al Kharafi Group, one of the Gulf’s largest conglomerates, controlled the second-largest stake in Zain Group and effectively controlled its senior management (chairman, vice-chairman, and CEO) via its fully owned Al Khair National holding subsidiary.84 Over August-November 2017, Oman Telecommunications (Omantel), 51% owned by the government of Oman, took over this 21.9 percent package for $2.2 billion.85

INWI ANNOUNCEMENTS OF 4G SERVICE EMPHASIZING WESTERN SAHARA AND LAAYOUNE.
Caterpillar is an American manufacturer of construction machinery. It is the world’s largest construction machinery producer and operates globally. In 2016 it was ranked #59 on the Fortune 500 list and #194 on the Global Fortune 500 list.

In Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara, an official licensed Caterpillar agency was opened only recently by Tractafric Equipment Corporation, a subsidiary of French-based Compagnie Optorg. While Caterpillar’s business in Israel has led to its targeting by the UNHRC and other UN agencies, the UN has raised no such concerns about Caterpillar’s operating a licensee in Moroccan-occupied territory.
Biwater is a British engineering company that provides large-scale water and wastewater solutions. Biwater has operations in over 90 countries and has taken part in 25,000 projects around the world. The company’s founder and main shareholder, Adrian E. White, a leading figure in the British water industry, was knighted by the Queen in 2015 for his lifelong achievements on behalf of Great Britain in trade and exports.

In mid-2017, Biwater began construction of the first turnkey wastewater treatment facility in Laayoune, Western Sahara. The facility will “reduce the ecological impact of raw sewage and provide treated water for reuse.” The firm will also provide two years of training once the facility opens.
**Binter** is a Spanish regional airline based in the Canary Islands. Binter was awarded the Gold Airline of the Year award for 2016 by the European Regional Airlines Association for “its expansion into new markets and solid profitability despite a challenging market.” The new markets Binter is praised for expanding to are Morocco’s Western Sahara and the airports of Dakhla and Laayoune in particular.

Binter opened new air routes to Western Sahara during 2016-17. The first flight to Dakhla was made on the French-and-Italian-manufactured ATR 72. Binter purchased a whole fleet of ATRs for its longer-range flights, among them the Laayoune and Dakhla routes.

**ATR** is a joint venture half owned by Airbus, Europe’s consolidated air industries, and half by Leonardo, the Italian air-industry giant.

At the time Binter opened the Dakhla route, it participated in a purchase-lease deal with Bombardier and Air Nostrum / Iberia to bring the latest Bombardier CRJ1000 aircraft into operation on those lines.
BINTER DESTINATION MAP. PRIOR TO THE ADDITION OF DAKHLA IN APRIL 2017, THE ROUTE CONNECTING GRAN CANARIA AND LAAYOUNE (EL AAIÚN) IS IN THE MIDDLE.
Bombardier is the world’s leading manufacturer of both planes and trains, aerospace and ground rail transportation solutions. It is Canada’s leading techno-industrial corporation. Bombardier Inc. has manufacturing and engineering facilities around the globe, including in Morocco. As of 2017, 49.78 percent of the company plus 3.75 percent additional voting rights were controlled by the Bombardier family, who are jointly and via holding companies the principal shareholders.

In 2016, Quebec’s government-owned pension fund, Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Québec (CDPQ), completed the purchase of 30 percent voting and ownership rights in Bombardier Transportation’s holding company, BT Holdco, for $1.5 billion. The Bombardier website states that BT Holdco now “owns all of the assets of Bombardier’s Transportation business segment.” According to the agreement, CDPQ’s consent is needed to appoint independent directors to Bombardier’s board of directors.

In Morocco, Bombardier is actively involved in the competition for the LGV high-speed railway project to connect Casablanca and Agadir. Bombardier Transport Morocco’s director stated in July 2017 that extending the line into “South Morocco regions” would be a lucrative achievement for the company.

Bombardier supplied Spain’s Binter Airlines with its new Bombardier CRJ1000 aircraft via a purchase-lease agreement with Spain’s Air Nostrum, a regional franchisee for Iberia Airlines. The aircraft is being inaugurated on Binter’s newest line to Dakhla and Laayoune in Western Sahara. Furthermore, reports show that Bombardier’s agreement with the Moroccan government to set up Bombardier production facilities in Morocco included provisions requiring the government to prepare technically skilled staff. The task was entrusted to Moroccan national phosphates extractor Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP), which opened a program in 2012 to train thousands of young people. Indeed, according to the 2012
annual report of OCP Foundation, OCP Group’s corporate responsibility arm, the group was funding the OCP Skills program, including projects of the Institut des Métiers de l'Aéronautique (IMA), to prepare the skilled workforce for Bombardier and others. The program required that there be participants from all regions where OCP conducts business, including strong representation from Western Sahara’s Moroccan population.
Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. is one of the biggest international providers of construction services and multi-level technical and engineering consulting. Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. operates in over 230 locations around the world.

Major Jacobs stockholders include Vanguard Group Inc. (~9.5 percent); State Street Corporation via SSgA Funds Management, Inc. (~8 percent); Ruane, Cunniff & Goldfarb LP (~8 percent); PRIMECAP Management Co. (~6 percent); and BlackRock Fund Advisors (~4.5 percent).
In 2009, Jacobs Engineering Group founded Jacobs Engineering S.A. (JESA) as a 50-50 joint venture with Morocco’s state-owned OCP. With its 1,100 employees, JESA is the largest consultancy and engineering company in Morocco and the region.

Jacobs Engineering S.A. has its South Morocco regional offices in Laayoune, Western Sahara. The company was commissioned by OCP to plan new settlement-cities in Western Sahara: the “sustainable city” and the academic knowledge-based Technopole in Foum El Oued, near Laayoune. The OCP’s vision of the Technopole is “a city of knowledge and innovation to benefit the southern regions,” led by OCP’s Phosboucraâ Foundation.

Jacobs Engineering’s global industry leadership, in conjunction with its close relations with the powerful OCP, helped it to become prominent in Morocco and the region. Some of its major projects in Western Sahara include the Laayoune port, Laayoune washing plant, Phosboucraa fertilizer complex, and Phosboucraa storage. JESA is involved in conceptualizations, engineering stages, procurement, construction, and more.

A good indication of its vibrant business and industrial activity can be seen in its staffing requirements. Some of the most recent job postings on the Jacobs international corporate website are for positions at the Phosboucraa and Laayoune facilities in Western Sahara.
Western Union is a financial services and communications company, specializing in global payment services. It connects individuals and businesses worldwide by providing easy ways to move and transfer funds internationally. Western Union has over 500,000 agent locations and 100,000 ATMs and kiosks globally.

Western Union has service locations in Laayoune, Western Sahara, facilitating and enabling Western Saharan businesses and citizens to make global payments and connect with the international financial market.
Visit a Western Union® agent location near you to send or receive money, purchase pay bills.

Western Union® is a quick and reliable way to send or receive money in locations worldwide, such as supermarkets, cheque-convenience stores.

Search By:  Address  Agent Name

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City: Dakhla
Postal: 21000

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B. AIN AS PLUS
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SOME OF THE WESTERN UNION AGENTS AND CORRESPONDENT BANKS IN THE DAKHLA AREA IN OCCUPIED WESTERN SAHARA. THE FULL LIST HAS DOZENS OF NAMES.
Transavia Airlines C.V. is a Netherlands-based low-cost airline, a fully owned subsidiary of the largest aviation group in Europe, Air France-KLM Group.\textsuperscript{126}

Air France-KLM’s financial report for the first half of 2017 states: “At June 30, 2017, more than 50% of Air France-KLM’s share capital was owned by European interests – European Union Member States or States party to the European Economic Area Agreement.”\textsuperscript{127} France is represented on the company’s board of directors, currently by Jean-Dominique Comolli, former chief executive officer of the Agence des participations de l’État (APE).\textsuperscript{128} the French government’s holding and managing entity for companies it deems of strategic importance. APE is supervised by the French Minister of Economy and Finance.

Transavia Airlines launched a new, direct route from Orly airport in Paris to Dakhla on October 26, 2017. The head office of Transavia France is in Orly. According to Transavia’s website, “The beautiful city of Dakhla is on the south coast of Morocco, surrounded by the fascinating Sahara Desert.”\textsuperscript{129} Thus the French government-controlled company is not only providing direct air service from Europe to an occupied territory, but also denying its occupied status.

The route enjoys political support from the European Union. On January 22, 2018, shortly after it opened, the European Parliament approved an aviation agreement with Morocco which, according to the EU, extends to Western Sahara as well.\textsuperscript{130} The agreement is strongly opposed by Saharawi representatives.\textsuperscript{131}
AIR FRANCE-KLM GROUP

TRANSAVIA DESTINATION PAGE FOR DAKHLA. A FLIGHT COSTS 69 EUROS.
Atlas Copco is a Swedish industrial company with operations in more than 90 countries on six continents. While a majority of the shares are owned by private investment funds, two Swedish national pension funds own a combined 2 percent.

Atlas Copco supplies drilling machinery used by the Moroccan mining company OCP to mine phosphates in the Bou Craa mine in Western Sahara. Since 2013, it has delivered four machines to the mines. Karin Holmquist, who is responsible for ethics at Atlas Copco, defended the company’s actions, stating that “today there are no restrictions in trade with Western Sahara. The company maintains that its Business Code of Principles is based on international ethical guidelines such as UN Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for multinational companies and the UN Declaration of Human Rights.”
Royal Dutch Shell plc, brand name Shell, is a British-Dutch multinational energy sector company headquartered in the Netherlands and incorporated in the United Kingdom.¹³⁷ It has operations in over 70 countries globally and is number 20 on the Forbes 2017 list of the world’s biggest public companies.¹³⁸

Shell operates in 16 countries in Africa through a licensee called Vivo Energy. Until 2017, Vivo was a joint venture between Vitol Group (40 percent), Helios Investment Partners (40 percent), and Shell (20 percent),¹³⁹ distributing and marketing Shell-brand fuels, service stations, and lubricants in Africa. Vivo Maroc, Vivo’s presence in Morocco, does business in Western Sahara.¹⁴⁰ For example, it supplies its products and services to the airports in Laayoune and Dakhla.¹⁴¹ In April 2017, Helios Investment Partners and Vitol Group bought out Shell and completed acquisition of 100 percent of Vivo shares.¹⁴² However, Vivo will continue to operate and be traded under the Shell brand name.¹⁴³
**ITALGEN S.P.A. – ITALMOBILIARE GROUP**

**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN**
Italy

**STOCK EXCHANGE LISTINGS**
Borsa Italiana Milan

**TRADED AS**
ITM Annual

**ANNUAL REVENUE**
$68 million

Italgen is an Italian-based maker and operator of hydroelectric plants. In 2016, Italgen was sold to Italmobiliare in full (100 percent ownership). ¹⁴⁴

Italgen planned, constructed, and advised on a wind-power project for a cement plant¹⁴⁵ in Morocco’s occupied territories, which the company describes as “South Morocco.” It also developed and built projects near Laayoune between 2006 and 2011 and operated them until 2013.¹⁴⁶ The wind-power farm includes six turbines, and the electricity it produces is provided directly to the Moroccan national power grid. The West Sahara location was selected at the direction of the Moroccan government.¹⁴⁷
ITALGEN WEBPAGE SHOWING THE COMPANY’S PROJECTS, INCLUDING THOSE IN WESTERN SAHARA.
Gamesa Corporación Tecnológica is one of the world’s largest wind-turbine manufacturers, with facilities worldwide. In 2011, Gamesa supplied the turbines for Italgien’s wind-farm in Laayoune. From 2013 to 2016, Gamesa, as part of a consortium with ACWA Power, was among the finalists in bidding for Morocco’s flagship wind-power project, led by ONEE. It planned to cover all of Moroccan-administered territory, including Western Sahara. Eventually, the rival consortium of Siemens-Enel-Nareva won the tender for $1.2 billion.
In early 2017, Gamesa merged with Siemens Wind Power and became Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy.

Who Else Profits, Volume 1: Siemens already highlighted the conglomerate’s significant business operations in Morocco and the contested Western Sahara.\textsuperscript{153}

In addition to taking over of Gamesa, other recent developments included the launching of production at the Siemens wind turbine blade factory near Tangier in 2017, constructed at a cost of over 100 million euros.\textsuperscript{154} The products manufactured there are used for Siemens Gamesa and Siemens projects in Morocco and Western Sahara, and the remainder is exported globally.\textsuperscript{155}
2

NAGORNO-KARABAKH
NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Nagorno-Karabakh is a region in modern Azerbaijan that has historically had a substantial Armenian majority and was home to ancient Armenian kingdoms. Under the Soviet Union, the mountainous region had the status of an “autonomous province” or oblast within the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic. Amidst the ethnic tensions that broke out in the late 1980s with the impending collapse of the Soviet Union, the oblast declared its intent to secede from Azerbaijan, with Armenia’s military assistance. This led to a protracted war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and when a ceasefire was reached in 1994, the Armenian army was occupying Nagorno-Karabakh. Yerevan also seized control of the Lachin Corridor, a mountainous region that connects the non-contiguous Karabakh enclave with Armenia, as well as a ring of territory around the administrative borders of the erstwhile oblast.

While Armenia continues to occupy the territory, it is notionally under the authority of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), an entity not recognized by any UN member state except Armenia. Nagorno-Karabakh styles itself an independent state, but lacks international recognition and is entirely dependent on Armenian military and financial support. The United Nations, as stated in General Assembly resolution 62/243, regards Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding region (amounting to approximately 16 percent of Azerbaijan) as Armenian-occupied territory. This view is shared by the United States, the European Court of Human Rights, and the OSCE Minsk Group, which reports on what it calls the “Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan Surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh.”

The war displaced nearly 1 million Azeris from Armenian-controlled territory, and these refugees have not been allowed to return to their homes. Moreover, in recent years the Armenian authorities have implemented a highly organized program to encourage ethnic Armenians to settle in the occupied territories, which Azerbaijan has denounced as a war crime.

Azerbaijan prohibits foreigners from entering the occupied territory under Armenian or NKR auspices and vigorously protests foreign business ties with the territory. Nonetheless, a report released by Azerbaijan’s Foreign Ministry last year documents broad and extensive foreign investment in the territory, as well as exports of its products and exploitation of its natural resources. Baku has repeatedly called on countries and United Nations agencies to take steps against foreign trade with Nagorno-Karabakh, but these calls have never been heeded.
Caterpillar, an American company, is the world’s largest construction-machinery producer and a major American employer. In 2016, it was ranked #59 on the Fortune 500 list and #194 on the Global Fortune 500 list.

In Nagorno-Karabakh, Caterpillar equipment is used for construction of settlements, strategic roads, and infrastructure and for natural-resource extraction. In 2016, Azerbaijan complained about Caterpillar’s activities to the UN but apparently received no response from the organization. However, because of the company’s activities in Israel, it has reportedly been included in the UNHRC’s blacklist of Israel-connected businesses.
Airbnb is a leading global home-rental and hospitality-exchange service. The company is one of the pioneers of the Internet-based “sharing economy.” The UNHRC has targeted Airbnb because it does not prevent Jews in the West Bank from listing their homes on its site. The UNHRC does not, however, disapprove of Airbnb’s activities in Nagorno-Karabakh, where it allows listings for rooms in Armenian settlements such as Stepanakert and Shush, whose entire Azeri populations have been forced to flee.
FLSmidth is a venerable Danish global supplier of mining-industry equipment and expertise. The company supplies the Kashen mine, the newest mineral-extraction project of the so-called Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR). The mine is run by Vallex Group, a major player in Armenia’s mining industry and the natural-resource extraction business enterprise in Karabakh, via its subsidiary, Base Metals. (See further on Vallex Group’s significance to NKR finances in Who Else Profits, volume 1: Aurubis AG.)

FLSmidth engineers and managers work at the Kashen mine supervising the installation and operation of their machinery. Among other services, the company has supplied the mine with seven 50 m³ WEMCO flotation cells and Dorr-Oliver cells.

Exploiting the Kashen mine is a strategic priority for Armenian control in Karabakh. Indeed, Vallex, the operating company, is the NKR’s single largest taxpayer. The mining effort’s importance to the Armenian occupation can be seen from the joint visit to the mine by the presidents of Armenia and the NKR in May 2017. Extraction at the complex is expected to continue for 25 years.

In May 2017, FLSmidth won a major five-year contract with the Moroccan government’s Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP), the main extractor of natural resources in Western Sahara. Extending past partnership into the future, at least until 2022, this will mean at least a decade-long cooperation between the two companies.
AraratBank

**Country of Origin**
Armenia

**Privately Owned By**
Flash Ltd. (64.2%);
European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) (25%);
Rural Impulse Fund II S.A., SICAV-SIF (10%)

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AraratBank is one of Armenia’s largest banks. The controlling owner is Flash Ltd., one of Armenia’s leading business and holding companies and the largest supplier of diesel and gasoline fuels to Armenia’s Ministry of Defense and the military that are holding Nagorno-Karabakh. Flash Ltd. assets apparently also include the Stepanakert Brandy Factory.

AraratBank operates a number of branches in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on the same and equal terms as in Armenia proper, providing the full spectrum of financial services and tools, including construction and mortgage loans to the Armenian population. AraratBank extends special tailored loans, such as gold-backed loans, for cultivating and maintaining agricultural development in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and export credit lines for both SMEs and large business.

Until late 2016, Flash Ltd. owned (64.2 percent) of Ararat Bank, while European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) held (25 percent), and Belgian-Luxembourgian Rural Impulse Fund II S.A., SICAV-SIF, managed by Incofin Investment Management (10 percent). After 2017, AraratBank went through some structural transitions, including buying and swallowing in the Armenian Development Bank and merging with it. EBRD apparently exited most of its direct position but nevertheless continued its close partnership with AraratBank, providing it with high-profile loans. In September 2017, EBRD president
Sir Suma Chakrabarti held a meeting with his bank’s “longstanding partner,” during which EBRD signed two credit lines with AraratBank CEO Ashot Osipyan.181

Incofin Investment Management continued holding a position in the bank with some 8.58 percent of shares, as evidenced by its position on the bank’s board of directors and expert media reports.182

In April 2018, FMO, the Dutch development bank, announced about its investments of $20 million in AraratBank.183 As the FMO declares, “51% of our shares held by the Dutch State and 49% held by commercial banks, trade unions and other members of the private sector.”184
Ameriabank has been extending its services into Nagorno-Karabakh since at least 2008. The bank is part of the Ameria Group (CY), which until recently owned 65.8 percent of its stock. European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) owned 20.7 percent, while ESPS Holding Ltd., a Cyprus-based company, owned 13.5 percent. On May 7, 2018, Asian Development Bank (ADB), headquartered in Manila, Philippines, announced the acquisition of a 13.9 percent interest in Ameriabank, diluting other shareholders’ shares by a proportionate volume.
The Ameria Group includes Property Development Company CJSC (Prodeco), a provider of real estate market investments and construction works management services. Prodeco built Ameriabank’s Nagorno-Karabakh headquarters.

In 2013, Ameriabank held an opening ceremony for its Stepanakert branch, with high-ranking officials in attendance. In remarks at the ceremony, Ameriabank general director Artak Hanesyan emphasized that the bank would focus on lending to small and medium-sized enterprises; on retail lending, including consumer loans; and in particular, on mortgage lending.

Ameriabank’s presence in Nagorno-Karabakh is not a secret and is clearly described on the bank’s website. In addition to direct banking activity and services, Ameriabank and its owners and top management, through a range of public and financial-support programs, provide encouragement for Armenian population-growth policies in Nagorno-Karabakh. Furthermore, in 2014, Ameriabank donated 5 million Armenian drams (~$12,500 in 2014 terms) to the All-Armenian Fund annual telethon for construction of the Vartenis to Martakert Highway, which will connect the northern regions of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Ameriabank’s Visa AYO card program has promoted business travel and tourism to Nagorno-Karabakh through its partnership with Armenian-owned hotels in the territory, including Vallex Group’s Vallex Garden Hotel and the Europe Hotel, both in Stepanakert.

AMERIABANK’S VISA AYO CARD PROGRAM WITH VALLEX GROUP’S VALLEX GARDEN HOTEL AND EUROPE HOTEL, STEPANAKERT.
Luxembourg registered "HVS Holding S.a.r.l" owns 80 percent of ordinary shares in ArmSwissBank CJSC, while Jongo B.V., an investment company registered in the Netherlands, owns the other 20 percent. Both companies are apparently controlled by Swiss-Armenian businessman Vardan Sirmakes.197
ArmSwissBank is the market maker for Artsakh HEK OJSC, responsible for issuing and placement of its shares on the financial market. ArmSwissBank is a prominent player in Armenia’s bonds market and has been the Armenian government’s agent in the primary state bonds market since 2006. In 2014, it was responsible for 63 percent of issues on the primary market. Thus ArmSwissBank’s market making creates increased financial credibility for Artsakh HEK and smooth interaction with financial markets.

In April 2018, European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) announced its first-ever reverse repurchase agreement (repo) transaction in Armenia with ArmSwissBank, sending strong signals to the Armenian and European financial markets. The ArmSwissBank press release noted that “to support the transaction, the EBRD is lending up to 2.3 billion Armenian dram to ~$5 million ArmSwissBank for one year against US dollar Eurobonds issued by the government.” It added: “The transaction was guaranteed by Frontclear, a leading money markets development company funded by European governments and development finance institutions.”
Artsakh HEK’s mission is to develop viable and environmentally friendly local power-generation capacity for Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh. It is a strategic infrastructure company of vital importance for the Nagorno-Karabakh authorities, who emphasize their effort to develop energy sustainability via hydropower capacity development.202

In a recent interview, Artsakh HEK director manager Vahram Beglaryan stated that the state’s stake in the company had been reduced from 100 percent in 2007 to 10.33 percent, and that foreign investments now play a very significant role. In his view, this indicates that Artsakh’s business environment is favorable. Especially so provided that the foreign stakeholders show trust to viability of Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh economy and business environment.203

According to Artsakh HEK’s third-quarter report for 2017, at quarter end, ArmSwissBank’s obligations to Artsakh HEK stood at $1.3 million.204 ArmSwissBank’s owner, Swiss-Armenian businessman Vardan Sirmakes, was reported to be the largest investor in Artsakh HEK.205 He is a prominent entrepreneur figure in Armenian and Nagorno-Karabakh business circles and has even started a caviar production in Nagorno-Karabakh.206

On April 1, 2017, Sanasar Beglaryan, the younger son of Ararat Bank’s owner Barsegh Beglaryan, reported holding just under the 5 percent ownership threshold in Artsakh HEK and dividend income from Artsakh HEK shares totaling 41,528,000 Armenian dram (~$10,000), perhaps for 2016.207
Ardshinbank is a privately held Armenian commercial bank. economic estimates, it is the largest bank in the country and its largest taxpayer in the financial sector.

Ardshinbank has between four and six fully operating branches in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh, according to various reports. The bank’s system of instant global transfers covers all territories of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

As investor, Ardshinbank is an active contributor and shareholder of Armenian/Nagorno-Karabakh’s Artsakh HEK OJSC.

In 2015, the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) provided Ardshinbank with a $10 million loan to finance lending to small and medium-sized enterprises involved in the construction and operation of small-scale hydropower plants. In December 2017, Ardshinbank signed a $25 million trade finance facility agreement with Citibank and Asian Development Bank.

In recognition of its work in Artsakh, Ardshinbank was awarded an honorary medal by NKR president Bako Sahakyan in 2017.

In July 2015, the Irish Stock Exchange placed $100 million in Ardshinbank’s bonds (with an annual yield of 12 percent, to mature in 2020). The Irish Stock Exchange and its management were fully aware of Ardshinbank’s business in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh, as is clear from the issuing prospectus. Six months earlier, the Vienna Stock Exchange listed a $75 million bond issue.
**Tashir Group** is a Russia-based business conglomerate that includes over two hundred companies active across diverse sectors, among them construction, development, retail, energy, engineering, finance, and food & leisure. The group was founded by Armenian-born Russian businessman Samvel Karapetyan.

**Tashir Group** acquired the Electric Network of Armenia (ENA), Armenia's national power distribution company, over the course of 2015-2016. In November 2017, the group announced plans to “invest $1 billion” in Armenia’s energy sector. Thus Tashir Group, via ENA, supplies Nagorno-Karabakh with electricity produced in Armenia.

In the latter part of 2016, Tashir led negotiations to acquire Nagorno-Karabakh’s electric infrastructure, apparently with the intent to own and fully integrate the networks of Armenia proper with those of Nagorno-Karabakh. In early 2017, it was reported that Tashir Group's Armenia representative had held talks with NKR president Bako Sahakyan on developing new projects in the territory.

Between 2008 and 2017, Tashir Group built a new hospital and medical center in Stepanakert, at least partially as a charity project. The center, which cost over $22 million, not only serves as a medical facility, but also contributes to the technological, business, and human knowledge development of Nagorno-Karabakh/Artsakh. Tashir Group transferred a further $.5 million to the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic authorities after the 2016 war.

**Tashir Group** is also active in other geopolitical settings considered to be occupations by the international community. Since 2015-2016, the company has been constructing religious facilities in Russian-occupied Abkhazia. Furthermore, in Russian-occupied Crimea, Tashir operates a hotel, near Yalta.
NORTHERN CYPRUS
The Mediterranean island of Cyprus has historically been home to a majority Greek and minority Turkish population. In 1974, Turkish troops invaded the island and over the course of three weeks, took control of approximately 36.4 percent of its territory, leading the vast majority of Turkish Cypriots in the south to flee north and any Greek Cypriots in the occupied northern area to flee south. Seven months after the invasion, in February 1975, the Turkish administration unilaterally deemed the northern portion of the island a “federated Turkish state,” and eight years later, the Turkish Cypriot parliament declared independence as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which has been recognized only by Turkey and has not received international recognition.

This independence is nominal only, as Turkey is in effective control of the territory of Northern Cyprus and has definitive control of most of its affairs. Turkish military bases and a 20,000-40,000 strong Turkish Armed Forces presence, including tank brigades, air defenses, and immediately available air force intervention, reinforce this situation. Multiple rounds of UN-led negotiations have failed to bring about a resolution, and even the diplomatic process collapsed this year.

Shortly after the invasion, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution “demanding an immediate end to foreign military intervention in the Republic of Cyprus.” The Security Council likewise asked all parties involved in the dispute to “refrain from any action which might prejudice Cypriot sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment, as well as from any attempt at partition of the island or its unification with any other country.” The UN also determined that the subsequent declaration of an independent TRNC was invalid, and called upon other states to similarly refrain from recognizing any Cypriot state other than the Republic of Cyprus. Only Ankara has recognized the TRNC. The European Court of Human Rights, in numerous cases, has found that Turkish policy in Northern Cyprus violates the human rights of Greek Cypriots, particularly in matters of dispossession of property. Turkey has maintained a vigorous settlement enterprise in the occupied territory. Today, the majority of the territory’s population consists of settlers from the mainland. The flow continues, with the population growing by more than 10 percent a year recently, far more than the rate of natural increase. Many housing projects are being built to accommodate the new arrivals in the occupied territory. The settler population is accommodated by massive Turkish infrastructure.
investment in the area, such as an upgraded airport and direct water supply from the mainland. These projects rely heavily on the participation of foreign firms, whose technical expertise is indispensable. Turkey has also established many universities and tourist resorts that cater specifically to foreign nationals. The Republic of Cyprus regards direct ties with the TRNC authorities, such as entry through their ports, as illegal. Yet while Cyprus is a member of the European Union—and a state party of the International Criminal Court—many European firms do business with TRNC authorities, or with Turkish firms active in the TRNC. The UN Human Rights Council itself has released numerous reports on conditions in the north. In none of them has it identified economic activity by Turkish or third-country businesses as an issue even worth noting.

"Turkey is in effective control of the territory of Northern Cyprus and has definitive control of most of its affairs"

For several decades, Europe has been reluctant to pressure Turkey over the Cypriot issue because of an ongoing peace process aimed at the reunification of the island. However, the sides failed to come to terms on an internationally mediated accord in 2004, and UN-brokered negotiations dramatically collapsed in the summer of 2017, leaving no diplomatic horizon for a settlement. In the meantime, construction of the infrastructure of occupation continues apace, often with the help of foreign firms. Construction of new settlements also continues, ironically with the assistance of Palestinian construction firms.
Priceline Group is among the world’s top online booking and travel industry service providers. The group owns such globally known brands as Booking.com, Priceline.com, Agoda.com, KAYAK, Rentalcars.com, and OpenTable, as well as others.

In 2016, Priceline Group had over $68.1 billion in gross bookings and around $3-4 billion in profit (accommodating for goodwill value associated with the OpenTable takeover).

In keeping with its policy of listing hotels regardless of the political status of the territory in which they are located, Priceline offers hotels in the Kyrenia District of Turkish-occupied Northern Cyprus, or as it is called in Turkish, Girne.
Zurich Insurance is a Swiss global insurance company that provides a wide range of insurance products and services in more than 210 countries and territories. It is ranked by Forbes as the 91st largest company worldwide. The Central Bank of Norway, Norges Bank, owns roughly 3 percent of Zurich Insurance shares and is among the largest shareholders. Zurich Insurance prides itself on its corporate responsibility. For example, it has partnered with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on a flood resilience program to preemptively mitigate flooding around the world. Zurich will provide the program’s insurance.

In 2008, Zurich Insurance bought Turkish bank TEB's insurance division, TEB Sigorta and renamed it. Since then it has been a fully owned subsidiary and is known as Zurich Sigorta. The acquisition included TEB Sigorta business operations in Northern Cyprus (the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, or TRNC). In 2011-12, Zurich Sigorta (Turkish for “Zurich Insurance”) launched the new corporate “Zurich” brand in the TRNC. Lutz Christian Bauer, then CEO of Zurich Insurance Turkey, announced that the company was presenting the global service quality of Zurich, continental Europe, and the UK to the people of the TRNC. In 2011, Zurich Insurance invested 4.5 million Turkish liras in the TRNC operation’s growth ($2.5-3 million in 2011 terms) and in 2012, the company opened an official retail branch there. By 2016, Zurich Insurance was represented on the supervisory board of the Association of Insurance and Reinsurance Companies of TRNC and was engaged in financial transactions with the local government.
Danske Bank is a Danish bank with a strong legacy and presence in Scandinavian countries and Northern Europe generally. Danske Bank and its subsidiaries make substantial profits on investments in international and multinational businesses active in contested or occupied territories.260

It has extensive holdings in companies doing business in occupied Cyprus, including Koç Holding, and separate direct shareholdings in Tofas and Tupras;261 Zurich Insurance;262 Sabanci Holding, and separate direct shareholdings in CIMSA;263 and Adidas AG (which has authorized branches in Northern Cyprus, and also, Crimea, and Western Sahara). In 2016, Danske Invest Allocation invested in Vodafone, one of the world’s largest mobile providers and the founder and owner of North Cyprus’s KKTC Telsim. Danske’s 2017 annual reports show significant investments in several companies: Sweden’s Trelleborg AB, which has been serving as a vital contractor for the recent consolidation of Turkey’s and North Cyprus water supply systems; TeliaSonera; and directly in Turkcell (see section 3.9, Telia Company (TeliaSonera)-Turkcell, in this report).264

Danske has, however, engaged in a highly publicized boycott of certain Israeli firms, ostensibly because of what the bank describes as their “illegal” activities in occupied territories.265
TNT Express is one of the world’s largest providers of express mail services. The company offers and provides its full range of services in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC),266 which it regards as an integral part of its Turkish operation.267 TNT has five branches in North Cyprus.268 On May 26, 2016, TNT Express was acquired by its American rival FedEx, which is attempting to expand to new markets. As FedEx then owned more than 98 percent of TNT shares, TNT was also delisted from public trading.269 Since then, FedEx has been working to fully integrate TNT into its operations.

On the screen capture below, one can see here TNT.com listings for its Turkey locations. North Cyprus, shown here as KKTC (the Turkish acronym for Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus), appears along with cities such as Istanbul and Izmir.270
**Ford Motor Company**, USA, and Koç Holding Turkey\(^{271}\) have a joint venture in a public automotive production company called **Ford Otosan (Ford Otomotiv Sanayi Anonim Şirketi)**. In addition to its production functions, **Ford Otosan** is also the sole distributor of Ford vehicles in Turkey.\(^{272}\)

**Ford Otosan** sells trucks in North Cyprus and has official representatives and dealerships there. As of 2017, **Ford** was the number one brand of car sales in Turkish North Cyprus. From January to April 2017, two hundred Fords were sold, and the brand has led the sales numbers in all recent years.\(^{273}\)

The company also has direct connections with the occupation authorities. As recently as December 2016, Turkey donated 16 new Ford trucks to the TRNC Interior Ministry. Attending the special dedication ceremony was Serhan Turfan, director of **Ford Trucks** Turkey, a brand division of **Ford Otosan**. Turfan stated that all of the donated vehicles are of Turkish (**Ford Otosan**) production, and that 60 Ford trucks are sold annually in the TRNC. He added that Ford Trucks will cover the maintenance costs of the donated trucks for the next three years,\(^{274}\) while its local distributor, **Minsan Engineering**, will undertake the training. This makes Ford a direct and purposeful partner in the Turkish occupation and settlement program in Cyprus.
BNP Paribas SA is one of the largest banks in the world, ranking 24th on the Forbes Global 2000 List in 2016. BNP provides retail banking and services as well as corporate and institutional banking (CIB) services in over 80 countries worldwide, with EU countries as its base. The government of Belgium is the single largest shareholder, controlling at least 7.7 percent through Société Fédérale de Participations et d’Investissement (SFPI), the Belgian federal government’s holding and investment corporation. The government of Luxembourg controls 1 percent. As of December 31, 2016, SFPI’s holding in BNP Paribas was worth some 13 percent of the total value of SFPI’s public holdings portfolio. In 2016, the Belgian government sold 2.5 percent of its BNP Paribas holdings for over $2.3 billion, and receiving a $100 million dividend that was included in the 2017 Belgian state budget.

BNP Paribas SA operates in Northern Cyprus through its majority ownership and partnership in the Turkish Economic Bank (TEB), in which it controls some 72.5 percent of shares. BNP Paribas directly and through direct subsidiaries owns roughly 45 percent of TEB shares. The remaining 55 percent of the stock is held by TEB Holding, a fifty-fifty joint venture of BNP Paribas SA and Çolakoğlu Group.

TEB, the sixth-largest privately owned bank in Turkey, operates in various financial fields including investment, leasing, factoring, insurance, and portfolio management. It has four service branches and many ATMs throughout Northern Cyprus.
BNP PARIBAS OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE. BELGIAN STATE HOLDS 7.7% THROUGH SFPI.

CONTENT PAGE OF 2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF TEB – A BNP PARIBAS COMPANY, SUBMITTED TO THE TRNC’S CENTRAL BANK. BNP PARIBAS LOGOTYPE ABOVE THE TITLE THAT READS “TRNC SUBSIDIARY [ACTIVITY] 2016 FINANCIAL REPORT.”
Adana Çimento has two subsidiaries in North Cyprus, which are responsible for bagging the cement sent from Adana’s grinding plants and its further sales. The subsidiaries are Adana Çimento San ve Tic. Ltd., located in Gazi Magosa, and Adana Çimento Free Port Ltd., which is in the Famagusta Free Port and Zone (Gazimağusa Serbest Liman Bölgesi in Turkish). Adana Çimento states on its website that its plants and the Cyprus Terminal, “which was established in 2006 in order to carry out bulk and bagged cement marketing activities in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, continues to contribute to the development of the region.”

Adana Çimento is a subsidiary, via OYAK Cement, of OYAK Group, the Turkish army’s pension fund. OYAK Group controls some 57.77 percent of Adana Çimento shares. The relationship is clear even visually, as the Adana Çimento logo carries the OYAK Group imprint in the upper left corner. The Turkish army is the occupying force in Northern Cyprus.

From 2001 until at least 2014-2016, Adana Çimento continuously topped the list of taxpayers headquartered in the Adana region. Adana Çimento paid more taxes to the budget than any other company, with corporate taxes for 2014 alone totaling some $12 million.

Adana Çimento is a popular investment among large asset management funds. Schroders Plc of London (LSE: SDR, £2.15 billion) holds close to 1 percent of Adana Çimento shares, enough to qualify for voting rights on the board of directors. Other investors include funds such as the City of New York Group Trust, Washington University in St. Louis, Employees’ Retirement Fund of the City of Dallas, Teacher Retirement System of Texas, and California Public Employees’ Retirement System. Investors in Europe include Irish Life Assurance plc and many others.
RE/MAX is a global leader in real estate services, with over 110,000 agents in franchises in 112 countries and territories all over the world.288

RE/MAX has been operating in Northern Cyprus at least since 2003, when RE/MAX Golden was established in Kyrenia/Girne.289 RE/MAX Golden operates across the entire spectrum of real estate services. It specializes in land and property sales in the occupied territory and provides financing and legal services.290 It should be noted that much of the land in northern Cyprus was expropriated from Greek Cypriot refugees and has been the subject of extensive litigation in the European Court of Human Rights, which ruled that Turkish policy in Northern Cyprus violates the human rights of Greek Cypriots, particularly in matters of dispossession of property.291

Another RE/MAX franchise, RE/MAX Premier, is based in Nicosia/ Lefkosa,292 and the whole of the North Cyprus network is part of the RE/MAX business structure for Turkey.293
A BEACHFRONT LOT OFFERED IN ALSANÇAK FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HOTEL AND OTHER LUXURY PROPERTY.

MAX ADVERTISEMENTS ON MEHMET AKIF BOULEVARD IN NICOSIA/LEFKOSA, JUST ABOVE A BRANCH OF TURKCELL, AS SEEN VIA GOOGLE STREET VIEW.
### Telia Company - Turkcell

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Sweden, Finland, Turkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stock Exchange Listings</td>
<td>Bursa Istanbul, NYSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traded As</td>
<td>TCELL, TKC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Affiliation</td>
<td>Governments of Sweden and Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Revenue</td>
<td>$176 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Telia Company,** formerly **TeliaSonera,** resulted from the merger in 2002 of Sweden’s **Telia** and Finland’s **Sonera,** both governmental companies that had been rebranded, partially privatized, and modernized. **Telia** had been the incarnation of Sweden’s governmental communications monopoly,\(^296\) while **Sonera** had been Finland’s governmental telecommunications authority.\(^297\)

Sweden continues to control **Telia Company** and not only is the single largest shareholder, with 37.3 percent, but is also the only shareholder with more than a 5 percent stake.\(^298\) Finland, via its **Solidium Oy** sovereign wealth fund, holds 3.2 percent of **Telia Company** shares,\(^299\) while U.S.-based **Capital Group** holds 3.8 percent.\(^300\)

**Telia** is a founder and the biggest stake owner of Turkey’s national and international telecom provider **Turkcell.**\(^301\) **Turkcell** is the biggest telecom provider in Northern Cyprus via its fully owned subsidiary **Kuzey Kıbrıs Turkcell,** also known as **KKTCell.**

**Turkcell** shares its revenues in Northern Cyprus with the North Cyprus occupation authorities.\(^302\) According to **Turkcell** data for 2015, its revenues in Northern Cyprus that year stood at some 131 million Turkish lira or about $45 million in 2015 terms.

For years, **Telia** attempted, through negotiations, to gain even greater control of **Turkcell,** but in May and September 2017, it sold some 14 percent of its direct shares for over $1 billion, in keeping with its new strategy to consolidate its operations in its core Nordic and Baltic regions.\(^303\) **Telia** thus reduced its direct ownership, but it remains the largest shareholder overall, with a 24 percent stake via **Turkcell Holding.**
TURKCELL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2015, SHOWING TURKCELL GROUP’S GLOBAL BUSINESS MAP. NORTH CYPRUS OPERATIONS ARE FEATURED UNDER “TRNC – KKTCCELL.”
Robert Bosch GmbH, better known as Bosch, is one of the world’s largest manufacturing firms, well known for home appliances and automotive products. Bosch Group’s global operations are extremely diversified and include some 440 subsidiaries and regional companies in 60 countries. The company’s ownership structure is both centralized and rather unique. Robert Bosch Stiftung, a charitable foundation, holds 92 percent of the share capital of Robert Bosch GmbH, while Robert Bosch Industrietreuhand KG, an industrial trust, holds 92 percent of the voting rights representing the business management and leadership side attached to the share capital held by Robert Bosch Stiftung. According to company statements, the remaining 8 percent is shared among the heirs of the company’s founder, Robert Bosch.

While the company is privately-owned, it does issue bonds and other financings instruments. For example, ISIF - Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, the Irish government’s sovereign development fund, invested in Robert Bosch GmbH debt instruments from 2015-17.

In Turkish-occupied Northern Cyprus, Bosch has shops in commercial districts and malls. Examples are the new City Mall in Gazimağusa (Famagusta) and at least two more Bosch appliance stores in the city. In fact, Bosch is represented in Northern Cyprus by a number of official distributors, possibly differentiated by the industry sectors in which they operate.

The Robert Bosch GmbH website, bosch-professional.com, lists Ilay M. Henc/IMG Ltd. as its official business representative in Northern Cyprus, while other significant business groups, such as YAR Group, also claim to have official representation status.

An officially licensed Bosch Car Service operates in Gazimağusa. It is part of Bosch Car Service (BCS) Turkey, one of the two BCS’s in Northern Cyprus. The other is in Girne.
In September 2018, Bosch opened its newest specialized arm in Turkish Northern Cyprus, Bosch Thermotechnology, with an established local partner, Mr. Pipe Group.

To add to the overall picture, it is worth noting Bosch’s business presence in other territories. In Morocco’s Western Sahara, Bosch Car Services, which is licensed by Robert Bosch GmbH, operates in Laayoune.


17. Ibid. p. 58.


33 Ibid.
47 4-Traders. “Wafa Assurance (WAA),” https://www.4-traders.com/WAFA-ASSURANCE-1408744/company/, accessed May 10, 2018; see also further in this chapter.
51 See this report’s section on Atlas Copco.
52 Dagens Næringsliv. “DN Believes: When the Parliament Debated the Sovereign Wealth Fund, the most important question was left in the shadow,” May 3, 2017, https://www.dn.no/meringen/2017/05/01/2012/Leder/dn-mener-da-stortingset-debaterte-oliefondet-havnet-det-viktigste-sporsmallet-i-skyggen.
56 Ibid., letter to shareholders from the CEO, April 2017.
58 TripAdvisor flight search, https://www.tripadvisor.com/CheapFlightsSearchResults-g479761-a_airport0.GVA-a_airport1.VIL-a_cos.0-a_date0.20170907-a_date1.20170914-a_nearby0.no-a_nearby1.no-a_nonstop.no-a_pax0.a-a_travelers.1-Ad_Dakhla.html.
59 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
71 4-Traders, "Enel," http://www.4-traders.com/ENEL-70935/company/.
74 Enel, "Where We Are," https://www.enel.com/aboutus/where-we-are.
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79 INWI website, https://www.inwi.ma/.
82


118 Solpart. "OCP." http://www.solpart-project.eu/about-us/partners/ocp/. For more information on OCP, see the section on Siemens.


125 Western Union. "Find Locations." http://locations.westernunion.com/search/morocco/?q=street%3ALaayoune%3Bcountry%3AMA&services-moneyTransfer.


136 Ibid.


188. Ibid.


198. Ibid.


255 Ibid.


262 See section 3.2, Zurich Insurance Group AG, in this report.


89


284 Ibid.


291 See, e.g., Loizidou v. Turkey, 310 ECtHR, Application no. 15318/89, pars. 13-14, 57 (December 18, 1996), http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=001-58007&filename=001-58007.pdf. See also Cyprus v. Turkey, ECtHR, Application no. 25781/94, pars. 28, 522, 299 (May 10, 2001), http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-59454. The Court did not consider the legality of the implantation of settlers, but did find their presence connected with a violation of property rights and intimidation and abuse of Greek Cypriots.


293 Ibid.


295 See section 3.9, Telia Company (TeliaSonera)-Turkcell, in this report.


305 Ibid.


308 Bosch Cyprus, Demirbag Group, https://boschkhbiris.com/.


313 See this volume. Chapter on Western Sahara. Kaufmann, "Bosch Car Service", Carte http://www.kaufmann.ma/?page_id=13409

314 Bosch Cr Service Maroc, "Carte BCS Maroc", http://www.boschcarservice-maroc.ma/?page_id=1800

This report documents the involvement of 37 major companies from 20 nations in three different occupied territories around the world. Yet in all of the occupation/settlements contexts examined in this report, the United Nations has never mentioned the issue of foreign business activity in its detailed reports on these territories. If such activity is truly a human rights issue, these massive omissions suggest a complete disregard on the part of U.N. for the human rights of people around the world. In this light, the UNHRC’s preparation of a blacklist of companies with ties to Israel appears to be part of the body’s well-known focus on Israel, rather than on a recognized human rights problem.

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