

CHREN HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC

Project in collaboration with Romero Initiative (CIR)

Call for Applications

The Hidden Journey of Palm Oil: What German Companies Have to Do with Human Rights in Honduras

Are you interested in the role of German companies in global supply chains and the human rights context in Latin America, including its effects on people's livelihoods?

We are looking for students who want to learn more about the German Supply Chain Act and the work of an NGO operating in Latin America.

I Project Description

On April 11th 2025, the NGO Romero Initiative (CIR) supported two plaintiffs, representatives of their smallholder cooperatives in Honduras, in filing a formal complaint under the German Supply Chain Act (LkSG) against two German companies operating in the food industry. The complaint was filed before the Act's administrative enforcement authority, the Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle (BAFA). The complaint revolves around offences against legal interests protected by Section 2 II No.10 and 11 LkSG perpetrated by a Honduran palm oil company. The complaint further establishes an indirect supply relationship and thereby corresponding due diligence obligations for the aforementioned companies.

On September 19th 2025, BAFA notified CIR that an ad hoc investigation had been launched, and on December 11th, BAFA required CIR to provide further information regarding the relationship between the Honduran company and the German companies. On March 5th 2026, BAFA announced the pending closure of both cases due to insufficient evidence of any supply relationship with a German subsidiary; in one case the closure of the case was officially communicated on June 29th 2026.

As a result, CIR seeks a **legal opinion** from CHREN Human Rights Clinic regarding the outcome of the case and the next steps to support the plaintiffs' claims. Information regarding the complaints will be provided by CIR under strict confidentiality rules.

A team of 4-6 students will conduct research to provide:

1. A detailed legal opinion (in English and – if team capacity allows - translated into German) answering specific questions on the German Supply Chain Act with an outlook to the anticipated transposition of the [EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive](#). (20 pages maximum)
2. A short PowerPoint presentation intended for a non-specialist audience
3. Possibly: a blog post or contribution to the CIR quarterly magazine

During the project, selected students will develop the following skills:

1. Legal reasoning and analysis
2. Drafting a legal memo on due diligence regulation under the German Supply Chain Act and the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive
3. Teamwork
4. Presentation skills for an NGO practice partner

Estimated project time commitment from students:

1. 4-5 hours per week (research, writing and student team coordination)
2. 1-hour weekly meetings with project supervisors in person (and on occasion online)
3. 3 meetings with CIR over the course of the project (online)

Upon completion of the project, students will receive a letter of recommendation from the project supervisors of the CHREN Human Rights Clinic, as well as from the Clinic Director. Participation in the project might also count towards internship hours, depending on students' principal course of study at FAU. Students from the **Law School** can be credited with 2 SWS as an optional course in "**Schwerpunktbereich 11: Grund- und Menschenrechte**" or "**Schwerpunktbereich 5: Internationales Öffentliches Recht**" and/or as "**Schlüsselqualifikation**" (§ 2 I JAPO).

II Desired student profile

We welcome students from Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, specifically those **enrolled in the Law School, MA Human Rights, MA Development Economics and International Studies, the Economic and Management School, as well as Master's level students from other departments with at least a basic understanding of human rights, such as those in political science, philosophy, or geography programs.**

We seek individuals with a strong dedication to human rights.

Proficiency in English, both written and spoken, is mandatory.

Proficiency in Spanish and/or German is advantageous but not obligatory.

We expect one student to serve as the "student project manager". This person will oversee communication among the student team and ensure that deadlines set by the project supervisors are met. We also expect a student to take responsibility for the text's consistent form. Furthermore, one person should take responsibility for correct and consistent citation. Please indicate your willingness to fulfill one of these roles in your application.

III Application process

Interested students are kindly requested to provide the following documents:

- a. Curriculum vitae

b. A concise letter of interest (maximum 500 words) detailing their relevant academic and/or professional background for the project, their current field of study, and instances of prior teamwork experience.

c. Although not mandatory, including samples of written reports, papers, and/or PowerPoint presentations would strengthen your application.

It's important to note that the project leaders do not expect applicants to possess prior professional experience in the field. The aim of the CHREN Human Rights Clinic is to provide participants with an opportunity to gain valuable experience in human rights projects. Therefore, examples of academic work completed during your bachelor's and master's degrees are also acceptable.

Application materials should be sent by **15th September (11:59 PM) 2026** via email with the subject line "Call for Application_CIR_BAFA_Project" to:

- Stephanie Regalia (stephanie.regalia@fau.de),
- Mauricio Ricaurte-Moncaleano (mauricio.m.ricaurte@fau.de) AND
- Daniela Kolland (CC) (daniela.kolland@fau.de)

Interviews will be held on **21-22 September 2026**, either in person at the CHREN offices in Nuremberg (Andreij-Sacharow-Platz 1, 90403 Nürnberg) or online. Final team selection decisions will be communicated on Tuesday, 29 September 2026. Activities will be done according to the timeline below.

IV. Timeline:

Timeframe	Project phase
Week of 12 October 2026	First student team meeting and official launch of the project
Last week of October 2026	First CIR/CHREN Human Rights Clinic meeting with student team
December 2026	Interim CIR/CHREN Human Rights Clinic meeting
End of January 2027	Delivery of final legal briefing and supporting materials.
First half of February 2027	Final meeting between CIR/CHREN Human Rights Clinic to present deliverables.

About the Romero Initiative (CIR)

The Romero Initiative is an NGO that has stood for labor and human rights since 1981. Their work focuses on Central America and supports campaigns and educational work in Germany committed to advance social justice. CIR was founded by the German Solidarity Movement for Central America in honor of the Salvadoran archbishop Oscar Romero, who during the 80's committed himself to social justice. CIR's vision is a world in which everyone can live a good life. As part of the Initiative Lieferkettengesetz, CIR advocates for binding supply chain legislation to hold corporations accountable for human rights abuses and environmental harm in global value chains: <https://www.ci-romero.de/>

About the CHREN Human Rights Clinic

The *CHREN Human Rights Clinic* is an initiative launched by the Chair for Public Law, Public International Law and Human Rights (Professor Patricia Wiater) and the Center for Human Rights Erlangen-Nürnberg (CHREN) in the winter semester 2024. The *CHREN Human Rights Clinic* continues the work of the former *FAU Human Rights Clinic* that was founded in 2021 and led by Professor Anuscheh Farahat in cooperation with Professor Katrin Kinzelbach and Professor Patricia Wiater, as well as the former *Human Rights & Business Clinic* that started working in 2022 and was led by doctoral researchers from the [International Doctoral Program Business & Human Rights](#).

The *CHREN Human Rights Clinic* has two primary objectives:

Firstly, the Clinic is an innovative teaching format that offers talented students the opportunity to develop their skills by working on real-life cases and projects relating to International Human Rights Law. Under the supervision of experts from human rights practice and human rights researchers at FAU, students will conduct interdisciplinary research to help partner organizations tackle cutting-edge human rights questions.

Secondly, the Clinic seeks to provide high-quality advice on complex human rights questions to NGOs, lawyers, international organizations and other partners from the field of human rights. To this end, practitioners can contact the clinic for advice on their advocacy work, research gaps and pro bono work. The Clinic does not act as the legal representative of a victim of human rights violations and does not initiate proceedings before courts or other human rights institutions. For more information, see '[For Clients](#)'.

Project supervision:

The Clinic Director is [Professor Patricia Wiater](#).

The Project will be supervised by two human rights researchers and doctoral candidates at FAU.

CHREN Human Rights Clinic coordinator ([Daniela Kolland](#))

The CHREN Human Rights Clinic team is responsible for administrative matters within Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, including ensuring that students receive appropriate university credits for their work on the project.

The Project will be supervised by two doctoral candidates from [the International Doctorate Program in Business and Human Rights](#): [Stephanie Regalia](#) and [Mauricio Ricaurte-Moncaleano](#).