

**"Freedom & Solidarity": an investment fund to promote human rights.  
10/12/01**

*On 10th December, the French Postal Service, mutual insurer MACIF and the 'Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations' launched a new ethical and solidarity-based investment fund that will support the International Federation of Human Rights' Leagues (IFHR). It is available to the general public at every post office in France.*

The three institutions have raised approximately 9 million EUR to start up the fund. The fund will invest 80% in bonds and 20% in equities of European, American or Pacific-based companies. These companies must meet a series of criteria laid down by the FIDH. STOCK at STAKE has been charged with the social-ethical screening and evaluation of the companies selected for this fund.

Sogeposte, the fund manager, has been instructed to invest in states with a positive record when it comes to the respect of human rights (\*), as well as in socially responsible companies. Some of these companies have drawn up a specific policy and control system to safeguard the respect of human rights.

The selection criteria are quite strict. The first filter consists of a series of exclusion criteria. These include: being involved in arms production and trading, developing commercial interests in Burma or being involved in activities which have, in a direct or indirect way, a negative impact on the human rights of local populations. A second set of selection criteria refers to the general strategy of companies for the respect of social and human rights, both inside and outside the company, in the industrialised world as well as in developing countries.

Half of the profits of "Freedom & Solidarity" will be paid each year to the International Federation of Human Rights' Leagues (IFHR) while the rest is left to accumulate for the investor's benefit.

(\*) Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Switzerland.