



World Council of Churches

Justice, Peace Creation Team

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To Mr. Miles Litvinoff
ECCR coordinator
P.O. Box 500,
Oxford
OX1 1ZL
UNITED KINGDOM

08 May 2006

Re: Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR) Shareholder Resolution (www.eccr.org.uk/docs/0603_shell_resolution_statement.pdf) at Shell shareholders meetings in The Hague and London on May 16, 2006

Dear Mr. Miles Litvinoff,

The Justice, Peace and Creation Team of the World Council of Churches commends ECCR for the shareholder resolution and the supportive statement, urging Shell to introduce appropriate measures and regulations in order to improve its social and environmental records.

In 1998, the World Council of Churches' Central Committee stated that it:

“urges all international oil companies active in Nigeria to review their operations in Nigeria with respect to their environmental and social impact, to use their influence with the Government of Nigeria to promote full respect for human rights and democratic freedoms...” etc. The Central Committee requested also member churches, related agencies and councils of churches “to inform the WCC of their actions in this respect and on the results of further dialogues they may undertake directly with Shell International Ltd. and other members of the international oil consortium in Nigeria.” Shell was specifically asked “to negotiate in good faith with the freely chosen representatives of the Ogoni people and with representatives of civil society organizations in other parts of Nigeria with respect to its corporate responsibilities in that country, including reparations for environmental destruction for which it is responsible.”

This statement was motivated by a visit of a joint WCC and All Africa Conference of Churches team to Ogoniland in 1995 after the execution in defiance of massive international protest of Ken Saro Wiwa and eight other leaders of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People and encounters with Shell representatives that followed the publication of the report of this team visit. The very same year, the WCC Central

Committee had withdrawn its call to boycott Shell that was issued in 1988 as part of the process to bring pressure to bear on the South African government over its repressive policies in South Africa and Namibia and to end apartheid.

Against the background of this history and considering the concerns you raise regarding Shell activities in Corrib (Ireland), Baylsa State (Nigeria) and Sakhalin (Russia) we are convinced of the importance of the initiative you have taken. We agree with you that the steps you propose are indeed necessary:

“in the interests of the good reputation of the Company, and the avoidance of costly delay to, or interruption of, production, and for the present and future peace, safety, environment and prosperity of local communities directly affected by the Company’s operations.”

In support of your resolution, we will make this letter publicly available at our website (www.wcc-coe.org) and make it available also to churches and ecumenical partners, especially in The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Aruna Gnanadason
Justice, Peace and Creation Team
World Council of Churches