

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES GIVES STRONG SUPPORT TO SHELL SHAREHOLDER RESOLUTION

NEWS RELEASE

from ECCR - the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility - www.eccr.org.uk

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The World Council of Churches has made a strong statement in support of the responsible shareholder resolution to be brought by the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR) to Royal Dutch Shell's AGM on 16 May.

In a letter from the WCC's headquarters in Switzerland, Dr Aruna Gnanadason of the Justice, Peace and Creation Team told ECCR: "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."

Referring to a WCC statement of 1998 that called on all international oil companies active in Nigeria to review their operations with respect to environmental and social impacts, and to promote "full respect for human rights and democratic freedoms", Dr Gnanadason's letter to ECCR goes on:

"Against the background of this history and considering the concerns you raise regarding Shell activities in Corrib (Ireland), Bayelsa 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."

The WCC says it intends to make its support for the resolution available to churches and ecumenical partners, especially in The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

ECCR, which has maintained a dialogue with Shell for 12 years and initiated a ground-breaking shareholder resolution in 1997 following the killing of the Ogoni Nine in Nigeria in 1995, issued a new statement last week arguing that evidence from Shell's current projects in Corrib (Ireland), the Niger Delta and Sakhalin (Russia) highlights the gap between the company's policies and statements and the reality on the ground.

ECCR also maintains that the Corrib (Ireland) project indicates Shell's policy deficit with regard to accepting environmental impact assessments completed by other companies, and that the company has not managed to convert dialogue with local communities affected by the three projects into changes in project design to accommodate stakeholder concerns.

Notes for Editors:

The full text of the WCC letter is attached as a pdf file.

ECCR's full reply to Shell's statement on the resolution is available at http://www.eccr.org.uk/news_main.html

The shareholder resolution and supporting statement are available at http://www.eccr.org.uk/docs/0603_shell_resolution_statement.pdf

Further details and information are available from Canon Christopher Hall, ECCR Oxford Group (achall@globalnet.co.uk, tel. +44 (0)1869 338 225), or Miles Litvinoff, ECCR Co-ordinator (miles.litvinoff@eccr.org.uk , tel. +44 (0)20 8965 9682).

Royal Dutch Shell Plc's 2006 AGM will take place on 16 May simultaneously in The Hague, Netherlands, and by live telelink at the Novotel London West Hotel and Convention Centre in Hammersmith, UK.

ECCR is an ecumenical organisation founded in 1989 to promote corporate responsibility in companies and in the churches. It was born out of an exchange between Industrial Missioners in the UK and a trade union in the Philippines. The latter said: "The lives and livelihoods of our people are decided in your boardrooms."

The *Chemical Engineer* said of ECCR's 1997 Shell shareholder resolution that it "could signal a change in the way multinational companies, many of which have Gross Domestic Products as large as a medium-sized country, do business throughout the world".

ECCR and international faith-based partners have researched and published *Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Bench Marks for Measuring Business Performance* (2003)

www.bench-marks.org

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