



Open Letter to Faith Funds, Churches and other religious organizations about ethical criteria and decisions concerning Chevron's activities

Dear Members of the religious organizations,

We write this letter to you hoping that your organisation and members will be motivated to call on Chevron to assume its social responsibility according to your values, especially in the field of human rights, social justice and ecological sustainability.

In the last decades, the growing investment in international financial markets has led religious institutions to organize themselves in coalitions such as the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility ([ICCR](#)) and Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility ([ECCR](#)) in order to actively participate in corporate governance and promote moral criteria concerning the activities of transnational companies. Several organisations such as the World Council of Churches have chosen [to divest from fossil fuel energies](#) in order to limit climate change. Lately, religious leaders like the Dalai Lama and the Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartolomew, as well as political leaders, welcomed the call of Pope Francis in his [Encyclical letter "Laudatio Si"](#) to reinforce justice and to set limits to damages caused by the technocratic exploitation of nature: *«The establishment of a legal framework which can set clear boundaries and ensure the protection of ecosystems has become indispensable; otherwise, the new power structures based on the techno-economic paradigm may overwhelm not only our politics but also freedom and justice»*.

Our long fight as indigenous and peasant communities affected by the oil operations of Texaco (now Chevron) in the Ecuadorian Amazon illustrates perfectly this urgent need to stop global environmental deterioration. The poison of Texaco's oil operations still flows in our soils and rivers. They affect our daily life, our health, plants and animals and represent a great danger for our future generations as well as for the world.

Future of the planet and access to justice

The destruction of earth by extractive industries as well as the lack of reparation represents an undeniable threat for the ecosystems and inhabitants of the planet. The Chevron case constitutes an emblematic example in that aspect. The contamination of Chevron (former Texaco) in the Ecuadorian Amazon represents one of [the greatest environmental disasters in the world](#). After 22 years, the refusal of Chevron to pay for the reparation of the environmental, social and cultural damages caused in the Amazon, despite the sentence issued by the Supreme Court of Ecuador, sets a frightening perspective for the future of the planet. Meanwhile, Chevron has paid [2000 lawyers to sue and intimidate the indigenous and peasant communities](#), as well as their defenders (including shareholders) to avoid the payment of the reparation, the poison of its harmful operations still spreads in the rivers and the soils, and affects the biodiversity of the rainforest. How long shall we watch the

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destruction of important ecosystems or protected natural sites like the Amazon, the Nigeria Delta, the Pacific and the Arctic, affected by Chevron's past, present or future operations? Shall the corporate greed win over the rights for a just reparation? Should the affected communities be forced to give in and to abandon forever their contaminated lands where future generations have no chance to live? Pope Francis made very clear that *"Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us."*

Recognition of the right to reparation

Whereas the [powerful architecture of corporate impunity](#) helps Chevron to prevent the victims' access to justice, civil society supports worldwide our rights to obtain reparation. The case was presented before the Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) as well as before the [International Nature Rights Tribunal](#) held in the occasion of COP21 in Paris. In the last years, [members of the European Parliament pleaded repeatedly](#) for reparation in the Amazon. In 2015, the corporation gained an international public shame award, the [Lifelong Public Eye Award](#), for being the most irresponsible company in the world, at the occasion of the World Economic Forum (WEF) of Davos. We initiated worldwide actions on [Anti-Chevron days](#) to raise awareness about Chevron's irresponsible behaviour in all the continents. The same year, joining his voice to an appeal of International networks of NGO's and personalities, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Prize recipient, called to reinforce [the social responsibility of extractive industries](#), in particular concerning the claim for reparation of our communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Globalization of the fight for justice

Our struggle against Chevron has become part of a global movement to denounce and sue environmental crimes worldwide as well as to prevent climate change.

As Chevron refused to pay the sentence of the Ecuadorian Supreme court and removed all assets in the country, we launched legal actions in Argentina, Brazil and Canada. Since 2014, we have denounced [Chevron's human rights abuses as well as its actions to prevent access to justice](#), before the UN Human rights Council (13). We also launched a complaint against the CEO of Chevron at the [International Criminal Court in The Hague](#) (14) and provoked a worldwide debate concerning the CEO's liability for environmental crimes in international law. Since 2014, the case has become the main element of the worldwide ["Campaign to dismantle corporate impunity"](#) where we participate together with other affected people to promote a [binding international treaty on transnational corporations and human rights](#) which is supported by more than 600 organizations worldwide.

Last year Chevron suffered a [historic defeat in the Supreme Court of Canada](#). It was clear that the judgment legitimates the actions of the plaintiffs to collect on their \$9 billion judgment against Chevron, not only in



Ecuador, but also in any country where Chevron has assets. The issue of this judgement will represent a worldwide precedent for the people suffering from corporate human right abuses throughout the world.

Today for the Amazon, tomorrow for the world

In the case of the contamination in the Ecuadorian Amazon, Chevron (formerly Texaco) refused to assume any responsibility concerning our indigenous and peasant communities' rights for reparation. Instead the company chose to undertake expensive litigation actions in order to avoid any payment.

Therefore we call for your support for the stockholder proposal regarding special meetings (item 12 on Chevron's proxy statement). This resolution, brought a group of Chevron's shareholders, raises the issue of the \$9.5 billion judgment against Chevron in Ecuador. Through this resolution, shareholders can press Chevron to seek an expedient, fair, and comprehensive settlement with the communities in Ecuador affected by the company's oil pollution.

Your support for this resolution would be an effective means by which you could demonstrate your solidarity with our affected indigenous and peasant communities in Ecuador. It would also contribute to holding Chevron accountable, and other corporations for their impacts on human rights, social justice, and the environment in the world.

Sincerely,

Humberto Piaguaje Luchante

Chief of the Union of the Affected People by Texaco (Chevron)

UDAPT

Unión de Afectados
y Afectadas por las
Operaciones Petroleras
de Texaco

Región Amazonica Ecuador