



## **Open letter from Texaco's victims to Chevron's shareholders**

We are those who Chevron is constantly trying to silence. We come to you, the shareholders, looking for the most basic empathy and respect we deserve as human beings. We ask but a minute of your time to read this brief letter in its totality.

You have been told - and will be told again and again - that the trial in Ecuador is but a fraud. However, no one has been able to deny the damage oil drilling has done to our land and lives. A great many of us are sick; others have already passed away. This tragedy came to happen because Texaco chose to design and construct installations with sub-par (or outright obsolete) technology: instead of using tanks, they drilled huge, unlined open-air pits directly in the ground, and used them to contain all the sludge and toxic water. This waste was then poured directly into the rivers of our Rainforest. Even though the technology was readily available, the designers and operators at Texaco did not re-inject A SINGLE DROP OF TOXIC WATER back into the ground, as they should've done. When they left they simply buried their pollution, where it remains still, poisoning us. That's an undeniable fact.

Chevron's management constantly speaks about a (nonexistent) fraud. What they haven't told you, is that the judicial decision upon which they base their fraud allegations is anchored on the testimony of an Ecuadorian judge that was separated from the judiciary under very suspicious circumstances. You're probably also unaware of the fact that we were denied of basic constitutional rights, such as being heard by a jury of our peers. The vast majority of us have never set foot in the United States, and probably never will - however, we've already been labeled as criminals that tried to "extort" money out of an American corporation. We, the real victims in this matter, do not have the necessity of bribing any judge: the evidence on record is clear, eloquent and powerful, and the harm cannot be hidden. Also, suggesting that humble residents of the Amazon have funds to orchestrate such a fraud is preposterous.

The truth is, we originally filed suit in New York in 1993, and it was Texaco's lawyers who asked for the company to be tried in Ecuador. Our only alternative was to re-file the legal action in our country's courts, and after 20 years of bitter battle, we emerged victorious. But now, our legitimate demands for justice are seen as a fraud in the eyes of a New York judge: a scheme supposedly planned by American lawyers. This judge determined that we, the victims, don't exist (by calling us "the



so-called plaintiffs”) and called for the decisions from our domestic tribunals to be ignored worldwide.

But we are not writing this letter in defense of the Ecuadorian judiciary. We address you to defend our claim, the one that has been laying at your doorstep for 20 years, the one that has been paraded in courts around the world. We know it is not you who have made the decisions that have brought us to this point; but we are convinced that you are the ones with the power to push forward and allow justice to materialize. After all, it is money that keeps this and all corporations functioning, and it is money that allows Watson to remain in his position.

It is beyond any doubt for us that Mr. Watson maintains a serious conflict of interest regarding the “Ecuador Problem”, since Mr. Watson himself promoted and oversaw the Chevron-Texaco merger. Any losses for Chevron stemming from said merger evidently mean that Mr. Watson made an awful business decision when acquiring Texaco. To make matters worse, Mr. Watson has spent more company funds in its defense against our claims, than what the claim was originally worth. This shows an absolute lack of willingness to resolve the environmental and social problem in the Ecuadorian Amazon Rainforest, instead choosing to strengthen a crumbling position.

20 years have passed, but we assure you the Ecuadorian victims will not falter in our plight for justice. The fuel we need to maintain our spirits lies there, right outside our homes. We will hold on for as long as it takes, we will follow Chevron into any and all countries where it holds assets. Would you act differently where you in our shoes? We have nothing left to lose.

In other words: please be aware that your investment in Chevron will never be safe. Sooner or later, we will collect what the company owes us in one or more countries, and you will unfortunately watch how your interests evaporate, all because of the inadequate manner in which Mr. Watson managed this conflict.

Therefore, human being to human being, we request you to distance yourselves from the unfortunate decisions of Mr. Watson. He has steered your company into world-wide #AntiChevron waters, and you do not need to share his responsibility in this.

The ultimate truth is that our reality transcends whatever a judicial decision or media piece can say. Therefore, we would like to invite you to



our lands, so you too can be first-hand witnesses of this reality, and get to personally know the victims: we all have names. We exist, we suffer, and are dying because of the pollution.

Finally, our deepest gratitude to those shareholders who have already honored justice in recognizing the validity of our claim, by supporting us and asking their peers to do the same.

Yours truly,

Humberto Piaguaje  
Coordinador  
UDAPT (Unión de Afectados/as por Texaco - Ecuador)