

## Advertisement: "Shell, clean up your mess"



Amsterdam, 16 February 2007

On 1 February, Shell announced its sky-high 2006 profits: 25.4 billion dollars, a record for a Dutch multinational. In his explanatory remarks of these figures, however, chief executive Jeroen van der Veer was immediately challenged about the problems which accompany the company's projects throughout the world. This was prompted by the full-page advertisements in the Dutch Volkskrant and British Guardian newspapers, endorsed by you and 6,697 others from 111 countries.

**Thanks to your support, the advertisement was a tremendous success!** This letter gives an overview of what has happened so far and our plans for the future.

On [www.shelladvert.org](http://www.shelladvert.org) you can find the texts for both advertisements and look up your own name.



Brenda Popenk



Hanna Jongepier

### World Social Forum

Milieudefensie and Friends of the Earth were at the World Social Forum in Kenya at the end of January, to call attention to the problems that Shell causes worldwide. Dozens of activists from South Africa, Nigeria and other countries helped to collect names for the advertisement. Thirty of Shell's 'neighbours' – women who live next to Shell's facilities in Nigeria – also donated 200 dollars they had pooled together.

### Milieudefensie at Shell press conference

On 1 February, Shell announced its profit figures at a press conference at its headquarters in The Hague. Representatives of Milieudefensie held a banner just outside the front door. They demanded that Shell headquarters accept its responsibility for the problems which Shell causes worldwide. Milieudefensie also distributed its report 'Use your profit to clean up your mess' to

**We're waiting for Shell's reply.**

journalists and Shell employees. The report describes the problems accompanying nine of Shell's projects and can be found at: [www.shelladvert.org](http://www.shelladvert.org)

## Shell's Response

Head of Shell Jeroen van der Veer said he found the advertisement unpleasant. He dismissed Milieudefensie's allegations, calling the information 'outdated' and claiming that Shell does clean up its messes. However, he did not address the specific cases. He also has refused to publicly discuss the issues with Milieudefensie. Milieudefensie stands by its findings and invites Shell to point out anything which it believes to be incorrect.

## Media attention

The advertisement has received a great deal of attention from both domestic and international media. It has been discussed on Dutch television and radio and written about in Dutch newspapers, as well as in the Guardian and the Observer. Ex-Shell employee Frits Bolkestein wrote in the Volkskrant newspaper that Milieudefensie missed the mark. Our response, which was published on February 13th in the Volkskrant, can be found on [www.shelladvert.org](http://www.shelladvert.org) in the News section.

## International support

Organisations in a number of countries sent press releases on the ad campaign to local media. In Hungary



Friends of the Earth Hungary

and Ireland solidarity campaigns were carried out. This international advertising campaign was met with great enthusiasm.

## We're going to keep on!

Apparently the advertisement is not enough to get Shell to take action. According to Thuli Mahama, director of Friends of the Earth Swaziland, our advertisements have dealt Shell a 'mighty punch'. In the coming months we will continue to insist that Jeroen van der Veer accepts his responsibility for the problems that Shell causes throughout the world. In mid-March 2007 we will be starting an international letter-writing campaign to Shell. You'll be hearing more about this in March.

With kind regards,

Anne van Schaik  
Campaign Director, Globalisation & Environment,  
Milieudefensie



Michiel Wijnbergh

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