

Chevron's Misleading Public Statements

Chevron has been actively misleading its American customers and the American press about its involvement in human rights abuses in Nigeria. A few highlights:

1. Chevron Was Deeply Involved in the Brutal Attacks on Nigerian Villagers

Chevron's Misleading Public Statements: "A Chevron spokesman ... denied Chevron supports, condones, or in any way cooperates with perpetrators of violence."

— Wall Street Journal, May 28, 1999.

"The bottom line of it all is Chevron has not been involved or connected to any internal police activities in Nigeria."

— Chevron spokesman, Los Angeles Times, February 24, 1999.

Chevron was "required to notify the Nigerian authorities," whose "law enforcement agencies" then made the decision "how and if they w[ould] respond."

— Chevron Media Statement, October 1998.



Chevron speedboat in the Niger Delta
(© Ed Kashi)

The Truth: "[P]laintiffs present evidence that CNL (Chevron Nigeria Limited) personnel were directly involved in the attacks; CNL transported the GSF (Nigerian government security forces), CNL paid the GSF; and CNL knew that GSF were prone to use excessive force... CNL did not simply 'dial 911.'"

— Federal Judge Susan Illston, August 14, 2007 Order Denying Summary Judgment.

2. Chevron Paid The Government Forces that Murdered Nigerian Villagers

Chevron's Misleading Public Statements: "We categorically deny we paid a dime to any law enforcement representative. As a matter of Chevron corporate policy, we would not pay any law enforcement agency representative." — Chevron spokesman Mike Libbey to Reuters, October 12, 1998.

The Truth: During the course of the lawsuits, Chevron has produced thousands of payments that CNL has made to the Nigerian Government Security Forces for the period between 1996 to 2000. This includes payments by CNL to members of the notorious Mobile Police. It also includes payments during the time of the attacks.

3. Chevron-Controlled Helicopters Were Used in the Attacks at Chevron's Request

Chevron's Misleading Public Statements: "Chevron's owns no helicopters or boats in Nigeria," company spokesman Fred Gorell said Tuesday. "That equipment is owned by a joint venture with the Nigerian government in which Chevron is the minority partner, he said. Chevron is not consulted about the use of such equipment, he added." —Los Angeles Times, February 24, 1999

The Truth: "In a meeting with [Congressman] Kucinich last month, Chevron officials conceded that on May 28, 1998, Chevron's general manager for public affairs in Nigeria, Sola Omole, requested Nigerian troops and transported them by Chevron helicopter to the oil platform." Kucinich press release, March 9, 1999.

4. The Protesters On The Platform Were Unarmed And Peaceful.

Chevron's Misleading Public Statement: "On May 25 200 armed youths boarded and seized Chevron's Parabe platform ..." Chevron Statement Regarding Seizure of Nigerian Parabe Platform. Chevron Public Statement, November 20, 1998.

"On the Parabe Offshore Platform incident, he said the occupiers, contrary to the suit's allegations, were armed with machetes, knives and clubs and were demanding ransom for the release of about 200 Chevron workers on the rig." Quote from Chevron in Wall Street Journal, May 28, 1999.



May 28, 1998: Protester shot by soldiers is being carried to helicopter after the attack on the Parabe Platform.

The Truth:

- "The villagers were unarmed and the situation has remained calm since their arrival." — Fax from Chevron Nigeria personnel to US Embassy personnel in the U.S. on May 27, 1998.
- "I have been told the youths are looking for employment and have thus far been peaceful." — May 26, 1999 email from a Chevron Nigeria official to Chevron public relations personnel in San Ramon, California.
- Ilaje were asking only for "community monies," by which he meant "[m]onies to assist the community, provision of facilities," and "had some concerns about environmental issues." — Chevron public relations employee testimony.