

Geneva, 24 October 2018

Mr. Charles O. Holliday, Chairman  
Mr. Ben van Beurden, Chief Executive Officer  
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## **IndustriALL Global Union calls on Shell to intervene immediately at Nigerian operations to guarantee decent working conditions**

Dear Mr. Holliday and Mr. van Beurden,

I am writing this letter to you as the General Secretary of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org), which represents more than 50 million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing sectors in 140 countries, to call your attention to the appalling working conditions at Shell's operations in Nigeria, and to call on Shell to intervene immediately to redress violations of fundamental human rights and labour rights.

This correspondence follows upon our previous exchange, including a letter dated 30 May (attached) from me to you summarizing some of the key instances of human rights violations reported by our affiliates representing your workers in, among other countries, Nigeria. These violations had been reported by representatives of Shell unions during the question and answer portion of the May 2018 Shell AGM. In the 30 May letter, I reiterated the willingness of IndustriALL and the Shell Global Union Network to establish a constructive dialogue with Shell for the benefit of the company and workers alike.

In Shell's 25 June response (attached) to IndustriALL's 30 May letter, Shell did not accept our request for dialogue, pointing out that "Shell companies engage with union representatives at the local level and will continue to do so." Shell's response also stated "Shell recognizes its responsibility regarding respect human rights and our approach applies to all of our employees and contractors." Shell defended its behaviour in Nigeria, saying "Shell companies in Nigeria (SCiN) have a long history of recognizing the rights of its employees, including to join a trade union," and that "we do not recognize the allegations that Shell fails to implement its human rights commitments."

In order to investigate reports of poor treatment and rights violations of contract workers and accusations of union-busting at Shell's Nigerian operations, IndustriALL conducted a fact-finding mission to Nigeria last month. Please find attached the report from that mission, which includes the testimonies of Shell workers from Shell's operations in the outskirts of Port Harcourt.

The report documents poverty wages, exploitation through contracts, fundamental rights violations, poor healthcare, health and safety hazards and miserable living conditions of Shell's Nigerian workers.

Taking full account of the dire situation of the workers and their families as documented in the mission report, I urge Shell to intervene as a matter of urgency to live up to your own code of conduct and address the myriad of documented problems experienced by contract workers at your Nigerian operations.

IndustriALL took note of [Shell's announcement](#) last month that it had agreed to join forces with other energy companies to create a collaborative approach to human rights supplier assessments in the energy industry. Shell also announced that Shell and other companies participating in this initiative recognize the importance of working with suppliers that respect human rights including the fundamental conventions of the ILO.

IndustriALL saw this announcement as a positive sign that Shell recognizes the need to improve respect of workers' human rights by Shell's contractors. We were however disappointed that Shell is entering into this companies-only initiative while declining IndustriALL's offer that IndustriALL and the Shell Global Union Network work with Shell to address the same concerns. Ensuring respect for workers' human rights in global supply chains requires a multistakeholder approach involving participation by trade unions including global trade unions, as indicated in the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct.

I wish to reiterate the willingness of IndustriALL and the Shell Global Union Network to establish a constructive dialogue with Shell for the benefit of the company and workers alike. In that spirit, IndustriALL would be willing to carry out joint activities, including a meeting with you, and also a joint mission to Nigeria.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Valter Sanches  
General Secretary