



MS. Fionola Finnan
Chairperson - Dochas Board
Suite 8, Olympic House,
Pleasants Street,
Dublin 8

Monday 2 August 2021

Dear Ms. Finnan,

As you know, society faces many challenges from climate change to declining biological diversity and the economic, social and cultural fallout of the COVID pandemic. The Irish government and indeed communities throughout Ireland has invested considerable amounts of money in overseas development assistance (ODA) as a means of helping less well-off communities in other parts of the world to deal with climate change, declining natural resources, human-rights and the resulting poverty that ensues. This is money very well spent. Unfortunately, many of the great gains made by the members of Dochas, including your own organisation Trocaire, over the past number of decades are under threat from the above mentioned challenges. The fossil fuel industry has been complicit in perpetrating climate change.

In February 2011, the Sucumbios provincial court in Lago Agrio, Ecuador issued a historic ruling in the case known as *Lago Agrio* against the Chevron-Texaco oil company, sentencing it to pay 9,500 million dollars for polluting the Amazon during its operations there between 1964 and 1992. Chevron has admitted that ²Texaco dumped over 18.5 billion gallons of toxic produced water into the rainforest near the small town of Lago Agrio from 1964 to 1992. As an indication of the effect that Chevron Texaco has and continues to have on the children and adults of Lago Agrio, I wish to draw your attention to the following brief report from Amazon Frontlines — <https://www.amazonfrontlines.org/chronicles/water-kofan/>

Through their Texaco Support for Sport Initiative, Texaco have, in my opinion, used 26 sports clubs in Ireland this year to greenwash the companies appalling human-rights record. The actions of Chevron-Texaco have been heavily criticised by Amnesty International, Greenpeace USA, and a host of other NGOs who focus on corporate accountability and human rights. Texaco's ³well-documented human-rights abuses must be of concern to Dochas. I believe the Texaco Support for Sport Initiative is a cynical ploy of greenwashing by Texaco and has the potential to undermine the decades of work carried out by Dochas member organisations.

I respectfully request that the Board of Dochas recognise the Texaco Support for Sports Initiative and the Texaco Children's Art Competition as real threats to your work. In my opinion, both Texaco initiatives are sending out the wrong message. We must demand an end to greenwashing from big polluters like Texaco for the sake of public trust in Ireland's Overseas Development-Aid Programme and what it stands for. Doing so would, in my opinion, be a great act of solidarity to be proud of with the communities in Ecuador, that Texaco still owes and has refused to compensate, and would help avert another ⁴Amazon 'Chernobyl'.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Faithfully

Tom Roche

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/jan/08/oil-companies-climate-crisis-pr-spending>

² <https://law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/keefe.pdf>

³ <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AMR5140902021ENGLISH.pdf>

⁴ <https://gizmodo.com/the-lawyer-who-beat-chevron-has-been-found-guilty-of-cr-1847364087>