

UNLOVABLE SHELL

"The Guardian" newspaper published a major article in the UK on 15 November 1997 under the headline "Unlovable Shell, the Goddess of Oil". It covered among other issues, the familiar subjects of Nigeria and Brent Spar. The following are extracts from a formal response by Mr Mark Moody-Stuart, the Chairman of "Shell" Transport and Trading Company plc:-

"...having seen our company branded as "unlovable Shell", I want to enter the debate on behalf of one hundred thousand Shell employees around the world - and their families - who feel personally affected when the company is attacked...

Some look back at the history of the 20th century and see it as dominated by some sort of evil empire, with Big Business playing the arch villain. Others believe business has enabled widespread economic and social progress... Shell's primary role is as an economic actor: creating wealth, providing employment and giving broad economic stimulus. We also have a responsibility to give a return to the people and pension funds who have entrusted us with their money...

We also believe that our business must uphold certain values that are completely separate from purely commercial considerations... To that end we have, and have had for many years, a published statement of the principles which govern the way we operate. They cover business integrity, political activities, health, safety and the environment... In other words, the Statement provides, for our employees to follow and for the outside world to judge us by, an ethical framework which is mandatory, not optional but just having those principles is no longer enough. In the past... an oil company could say "trust me"... Today, people say "tell me - listen to me - show me"...

Like history, we have not been perfect. But history and economic development has brought to millions of people the benefits of real progress which Shell companies all around the world have been a significant part of the progress. And we intend to continue to be.

The full response is published on Shell's website:
www.shell.com