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ConocoPhillips (U.K) Holdings Limited  
Att: Thomas Marr Ballantyne, Director  
20<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1 Angel Court  
London  
EC2R 7HJ

20 November 2020

Dear Mr Ballantyne,

### **LPG Deliveries from Teesside to Occupied Western Sahara**

Western Sahara Resource Watch and Western Sahara Campaign UK are writing to enquire about LPG exports from the ConocoPhillips terminal at Teesside port to occupied Western Sahara. We write you as director of both ConocoPhillips (U.K) Holdings Limited and its subsidiary ConocoPhillips (U.K) Teesside Operator Limited.

On 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020, the vessel *Eco Nemesis* (IMO 9719525) arrived at ConocoPhillips terminal, jetty number 8, to pick up gas. The vessel left Teesside harbour on 6 June with a destination of El Aaiún, in the occupied part of the non-self-governing territory of Western Sahara. It arrived in El Aaiún port on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June, *Eco Nemesis* again departed Teesside, arriving in El Aaiún on 30<sup>th</sup> June. The operator of the vessel at the time of these two incidents was Greek company Stealth Corp.

Our two associations have followed trade in and out of occupied Western Sahara for the last decade. These are amongst the first shipments of gas from the UK directly into the occupied territory. This trade is highly controversial.

As you perhaps know, Morocco illegally annexed part of Western Sahara by military force in 1975 in violation of the basic right to self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. This military invasion was condemned by the United Nations General Assembly and to this day, Western Sahara remains listed by the UN as a Non-Self-Governing Territory, pending a decolonization process. On international rankings, such as by Freedom House, Western Sahara scores lowest in the world on political freedoms. Leading human rights defenders from Western Sahara, including the general-secretary of the association that would normally take part in monitoring foreign involvement on their land, are currently serving life-time sentences in Moroccan jails.

In line with the International Court of Justice, the Court of Justice of the European Union has outlined, in four separate rulings, that the Government of Morocco does not have any legal basis, sovereignty or international mandate to administer the territory. The recent court rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union have also made it clear that in the event of an entity undertaking business in Western Sahara, consent must be obtained from the people of Western Sahara. It stated that the two territories of Morocco and Western Sahara 'separate and distinct'. Through contributing, by way of LPG supplies, to Moroccan interests in Western Sahara, the ConocoPhillips terminal at Teesside port today contributes to entrenching the Moroccan approach to the conflict through critical Moroccan industries on the ground.

On 13 November 2020 the Moroccan army broke the 29 year ceasefire between itself on the Western Sahara's liberation movement the Polisario. Occupied Western Sahara, including its maritime area is now a war zone. Teesside port is therefore now supplying LPG to the belligerent party.

We would appreciate an immediate response to the following questions:

1. Does ConocoPhillips in general receive information regarding the export destination of a cargo prior to loading being undertaken at Teesside?
2. Was ConocoPhillips informed of the export destination of the cargo onboard *Eco Nemesis* prior to the loadings of the vessel?
3. Does ConocoPhillips carry out human rights due diligence in relation to the shipments that it facilitates?
4. As a corollary of the internationally recognized right to self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, and given the legal requirement of obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of the people of Western Sahara with regard to activities or projects in their land – as put forth by several UN Treaty bodies and the EU Court of Justice – what steps, if any, has ConocoPhillips taken to obtain the consent of the people of Western Sahara prior to allowing its facility in Teesside to be used for gas exports to Western Sahara?
5. Which company exported the LPG onboard the mentioned *Eco Nemesis*?
6. From which gas field does the cargo originate?
7. Has ConocoPhillips been in contact with the exporter of the cargo onboard *Eco Nemesis* with regards to whether the exporter has obtained permission from the people of the territory to export gas?
8. Is ConocoPhillips aware of any future shipments of gas from Teesside to the occupied territory?
9. Will ConocoPhillips guarantee that no further transports of gas are carried out to Western Sahara?

We are convinced that it is not in the interest of ConocoPhillips to become associated with continued colonisation, occupation and war in Western Sahara, and urge your company to

immediately take all measures to prevent the Teesside facilities from being used for such a purpose again.

Yours sincerely,

Joanna Allan

A copy of this letter is sent to:

Gary Dawson, Chairman, Tees and Hartlepool Port Users Association

Len McCluskey, General Secretary, Unite the Union

Ben Houchen, Mayor of the Tees Valley

Jacob Young, MP for Redcar

Frans Kalje, Chief Executive Officer, Teesside Port

Ryan Lance, Chairman and CEO of ConocoPhillips

Ellen DeSanctis, Senior Vice President, Corporate relations, ConocoPhillips

Nicolas H. Vafias, President, Stealth Maritime Corp SA