Speech of Follow This

at the Annual General Meeting of Shell plc; London, May 21, 2024

Good day Mr. chairman, directors, and fellow shareholders. It's hard to speak to stony faces, however, I hope you are paying close attention to a shareholder who is expressing the concerns of around 20% of your shareholders.

Because 1 in 5 of your shareholders voted in favour of the Follow This climate resolution at the previous AGM.

In a shareholder democracy, where typically 99% votes with management, 20% represents a clear shareholder rebellion, more than your largest shareholders BlackRock, Vanguard, State Street, and Norges Bank combined.

These 20% are committed to achieving the Paris Climate Agreement to limit global warming.

These institutional investors understand mitigating climate risk to be fundamental to their fiduciary duty. They regard fossil fuel emissions as a significant risk to the global economy and, by extension, their assets.

A year ago, 20% of your shareholders voted in favour of the Follow This climate resolution supporting Shell to improve its climate targets.

Mr. Sawan, your job is to address the concerns of these shareholders. They are your owners.

What did you give these shareholders? The opposite. You weakened your 2030 target, and completely scrapped your 2035 target. On top of that, Shell stated that it will not further reduce its total emissions this decade.

Let's get the load of this dear shareholders: the world has pledged to halve emissions by 2030, and your company, one of the highest emitters in the world, will not reduce emissions this decade.

Your board is determined to cling to turning hydrocarbons into petrodollars for as long as possible because they can’t imagine other business models that are as lucrative.

Your board doesn't want to come out of their comfort zone of the carbon-based business model, that they have mastered during their careers. So successfully, that they made it to the executive suits and to this stage.
Shareholder, we must ask ourselves: are we not going to solve this problem because the boards of fossil fuel companies don’t know how to make profits with clean energy and therefore don’t want to explore new business models instead of more oil and gas?

Will we let climate change spiral out of control, with disastrous consequences for the world, because these board members refuse to leave their comfort zones?

That’s an ending that I and many others, including your shareholders, are not prepared to accept.

Your board will only choose a different road if you, the owners of the company, step out of your comfort zone and vote for change, like 1 in 5 of your peers did last year.

You can do so by voting for the climate resolution 23 co-filed by 27 investors with assets under management of 4 trillion euros, roughly 20 times Shell’s market capitalization.

Today, when the votes of this AGM are shown, we will know how many shareholders are real stewards of the global economy and how many shareholders enable Shell and other oil majors to continue to cause climate breakdown, jeopardize the long-term future of their companies.

Today, votes for resolution 23 will show which investors are committed to Paris and which investors enable the fossil fuel industry to postpone climate action.

We thank all investors who voted for change today, specifically the 27 investor who co-filed the climate resolution, and encourage all other investors to follow their leadership in the future. Big Oil will only change if you vote for change.