

# Shell in Fraud Accusations

The Shell Company, a unit of Anglo-Dutch oil giant Royal Dutch Shell plc and the Dominican government's partner in Refidomsa (Dominican Petroleum Refinery) has been publically accused by the government of fraud. The accusations relate to "alterations in invoices" for imported fuel and were, initially, vigorously denied by representatives from Shell.

Shell is the largest distributor of fuel on the island and since forming a joint venture with the government in 1971, performs all management and administrative functions of Refidomsa. There were great benefits to the country through Shell's control of the refinery, but it has been reported that they benefited from privileged information about their competitors, bringing a negative effect as well. Shell allegedly benefited from the previous Balaguer administration when the ex-president approved fuel deposits in the north of the island to Texaco and Exxon while at the same time blocking the competition by purchasing the land sites with state funds.

The secretary of state noted that Shell played an important role when few internationals were investing here but noted that 'the current situation is more of a monopoly in the import and distribution of fuel'.

Pelegrin Castillo, President of the Energy and Mines Commission described Shell as 'Big Business' as they never comply with the terms required by the state, obtaining immense benefits. The company was supposed to increase the refining capacity for the national demand but found it more profitable to import finished products than increase their capability with new technology. Castillo highlighted the urgency to increase the domestic capabilities with new refineries to process fuel for export and for local use.

Castillo also advocated in behalf of constituting a national corporation of hydrocarbons adding 'I think we are the only state that does not possess a corporation like this.' 'After the law of renewable energy is approved we will emphasize the exploration of hydrocarbons to reduce the high dependency on

fossil fuel'.

In 2005 Aristides Frenandez Zucco the then president of Refidomsa asked the President at the National Congress to revise the agreement between the state and the Shell Company, arguing that after 36 years it was time to adjustments to modernize those agreements.

Following a non-official visit by Andres Torroero, President of the Chamber of Accounts, both Shell Representative Rafael Maradiaga and Refidomsa President, Ruben Montas were interviewed by the Chamber.

A report from government representatives revealed alterations in invoices relating to freight on imports. Following this a meeting between Terrero and Octavio Lister, Director of Depreco anti corruption unit has resulted in a joint investigation to detect any irregularities and establish who is responsible. This will include an audit of Refidomsa who are joint shareholders in the shell company. They also suggested the Dominican government be given greater say in fundamental decision making in connection with naming candidates for key positions and with operations.

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previously campaigned for women's rights, will appear in the July addition of Playboy after revealing her mother urged her to go ahead with the photoshoot.

However, fellow lineswoman Aline Lambert is less convinced, claiming posing naked is 'incompatible with the profession'.

But all the negative press is unlikely to make an impression on Oliveria, who is reportedly set to make \$250,000 from the deal.

## German driver swallows false teeth

A German lorry driver caused a crash on a busy autobahn after biting into an apple and swallowing his false teeth.

Peter Seiler, 57, was driving on the A3 motorway near Wuerzburg when he decided to tuck into the apple.

But he chocked on a piece of the apple and as he coughed he ended up swallowing his false teeth.

As he struggled for air he

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