

Ecuadorian Victims Reject U.S. Court Verdict in Favor of Chevron



Quito, August 5 (RHC-Xinhua) -- Victims of the environmental contamination caused by U.S. oil company Chevron in Ecuador's Amazon on Tuesday rejected a U.S. ruling that Ecuador must pay a big sum to Chevron in damages.

The District of Columbia Court of Appeals ruled on Tuesday that Ecuador must pay 96 million U.S. dollars to the multinational which is involved in a lengthy dispute over the exploitation of oil resources in the country.

The court upheld a decision made in 2011 by a tribunal in The Hague, the Netherlands, after Chevron demanded reparations from Ecuador for violating the bilateral investment treaty it had signed with the United States in 1997.

Pablo Fajardo, the lawyer representing the affected Ecuadorians, wrote on Twitter that it would be "unjust for the government to pay Chevron after it committed an environmental crime against humanity" in the Amazon.

Chevron was originally sentenced by an Ecuadorian court to pay 9.5 billion U.S. dollars to 30,000 people in indemnities for environmental damage and health problems incurred by its operations.

The contamination was caused by Texaco, a firm acquired by Chevron in 2001, which operated 350 oil wells in the country between 1964 and 1992.

The American oil company rejected the verdict of the Ecuadorian court, saying that it was the result of a "fraudulent and illegitimate" legal process. The allegation was backed up in 2014 by a U.S. court which found "egregious fraud" during the case, including bribery to a judge.

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