

Adopted resolution on imprisonment of Irish peaceful protesters

Background

1. The Irish Government has allowed a consortium called Shell E & P Ireland whose main shareholder is Royal Dutch Shell to exploit the offshore Corrib Gas field in an unsafe manner to the detriment of the local community of Rossport, County Mayo. This involves the construction of an onshore pipeline to bring the gas ashore unprocessed and under very high pressure. The terminal for processing the gas is 9 km inland. The pipeline goes through a village where the residents are objecting, on safety grounds, to the pipeline being so close to their homes. They have accumulated enough evidence of the inherent dangers to substantiate their claims. Shell sought and obtained a court injunction to prevent the peaceful protesters from picketing the pipeline construction site. Five of the protesters have been indefinitely imprisoned for their refusal to obey the court injunction. The onshore section of the pipeline has since been found to have been illegally constructed. The five men have been in prison since the end of June 2005.

By the time this resolution is tabled at the Kiev Council of the European Green Party the men will have been imprisoned for 116 days.

Recommendations

2. This council condemns the Irish Government for its failure to properly manage the development of the Corrib Gas Field which has led to the violation of the human rights of five Irish citizens who have been detained indefinitely in prison without trial for peacefully protesting against the unprecedented laying of a high pressure pipeline carrying unprocessed gas through their village and across bog land to a terminal 9 km inland.

This council also condemns Shell E & P Ireland for seeking the court injunction against the peaceful protesters, which has led to their incarceration for 94 days. If the men are returned to prison, we urge the European Green Party to support the Irish Greens in a boycott of Shell Oil products.

The role of the Norwegian company Statoil has also been questioned in the Rossport issue. Now, with a fresh Norwegian red-green government, EGP expect that national pressure will be put on Statoil to ensure that the company act ethically both in this particular situation in Ireland - and in the rest of the world.