

Jo Seoka

BASF Shareholder meeting, Rosengarten Mannheim, 4 May 2018

Dear shareholders of BASF, for the last years we have been appealing to the conscience of your management and your board of directors, to take social responsibility along their platinum supply chain serious. Some of you will for sure remember the young man, one of the survivors of the massacre, who was asking you the following question last year:

“Why is it that people who are digging out one of the most precious metals on earth continue to live in appalling conditions in shacks without proper sanitations, water and electricity.”

Research has proven that companies do well in profit making on a socially sustainable and a peaceful non-adversarial environment. Therefore there is no need for you, shareholders, calling for the company to invest in socially responsible environment in which people come before profit.

As I stand here, I appeal to you, shareholders, to do the right thing by ensuring justice for the workers and their community.

Notwithstanding we once again ask of you, board of directors to seriously consider our previous engagements with you for the sake of your shareholders, who want to ensure ethical and socially responsible investment for their benefit.

This is the fourth time I have come to the shareholders' meeting of BASF.

Last year you made it very clear to us, Mr Bock, that we should no longer attend the shareholders' meeting because there is nothing new to report from your side. Please let me make it clear, Mr Bock: that is precisely why I am here again: Because of your inaction - BASF's inaction - in the face of the scandalous circumstances following the Marikana massacre.

As long as platinum is bought and processed by BASF from the Marikana mines and profits are generated from it, while the working and living conditions of Lonmin workers and the environmental and living conditions of the surrounding communities of Lonmin remain disastrous, there is reason enough to come back here.

As long as the killed Lonmin miners of 2012 do not receive justice and their wives or children have to do the work of their killed husbands or fathers, which is degrading and reminds them of the massacre every day - as long as they have to do this work because it is the only way they can ensure the survival of their families, there are enough reasons to come back here.

As long as Marikana's widows have to live apart from their children and their homes remain closed in their homeland, we will return here because their partner Lonmin contributes to the disintegration of these families that began under apartheid.

As long as the environment in Marikana is destroyed and the surrounding communities that suffer from it do not benefit from the profits of platinum generated by Lonmin and its business partners, we will have a reason to speak at this meeting.

It is not us and the victims we represent who have a duty to show that things are changing in Marikana, but your partner Lonmin, who is responsible for the living and working conditions that led to the strike and massacre in 2012. Lonmin has a duty to eliminate the effects of decades of neglect. Once we realise that Lonmin has taken responsibility for the massacre and made reparations, and when we see that working and living conditions have become more humane, we will stop disturbing your company.

We are aware that you find our presence disturbing. This was particularly evident last year due to the very unfriendly way in which we were treated. We were surprised by the force of your reactions, but that did not discourage us.

We are here again because yourselves have realised that living and working conditions in Marikana must not be allowed to continue as they have until now. In November 2017 you threatened Lonmin to terminate business relations if no progress is discernible in the foreseeable future with regard to the aspects already mentioned. In the past, we have always encouraged you to use the scope for action as Lonmin's largest customer to exert pressure to improve living and working conditions, deal with the consequences of the massacre and Lonmin's relations with local communities. In expressing this demand, we have always made it clear that we are not interested in inducing you to withdraw from South Africa or to refrain from using platinum from South Africa. We want you to use your room of manoeuvre to contribute to substantial change, taking into account your own commitment to supply chain responsibility. With this step already initiated, you have a concrete opportunity to meet your own demands for due diligence and social responsibility. In this matter you failed so far, you are rather in breach with your Global Compact commitment: This is making very clear that you should use your power as a leverage to improve the situation rather than following a scorched earth policy.

So please allow me to emphasise that mere termination of the business relationship with Lonmin would not only be counter-productive; it would also be a breach of the internationally valid guidelines of the United Nations - since you would deliberately pursue an "après moi le deluge" policy with your eyes wide open. How then you would like to justify, that "social responsibility" is part of your core brand?

And please, don't come along with your multistakeholder-initiative: This is obviously fallen asleep and also your not-transparent audits were rather there to symbolize activity rather than making a difference for betterment. So, we are here because we are deeply disappointed by your inactivity and indifference towards suffering human beings. And we are also here to remind you that you are in breach with your international standards.

This gives rise to our following questions to you:

How seriously was your threat to Lonmin intended? What mechanisms have you established to evaluate the changes called for? If there are no changes within the time period you have set, do you really want to carry out your threat? In this case: how do you plan to replace platinum from South Africa?

It has been speculated for some time that Lonmin could be taken over by another company. Have you already made contact with the potential buyer? What do you want to do to put relations with the potential new owner of Marikana's platinum mines on such a footing that compliance with social and environmental standards and their effective control becomes a matter of course for you?

Thank you for your attention.