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## Second Circuit To Hear Oral Arguments On Monday In Closely Watched Racketeering Case Against Activist Attorney

**“The illegal conduct of Donziger and the environmental activists involved in this matter cannot be excused by pointing to their alleged commitment to a cleaner environment. The continued integrity of our legal system demands that those unwilling to abide by the rule of law be severely punished.”**  
—Richard Samp, WLF Chief Counsel

**WASHINGTON, DC**—The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit will hear oral argument in New York City Monday morning, April 20, at 10 a.m. in *Chevron Corp. v. Donziger*. WLF Chief Counsel Richard Samp, who wrote WLF’s amicus brief, will be available after oral argument to discuss the case.

This closely watched appeal involves a district court judgment that held attorney Steven Donziger liable under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) for the corrupt way he pressed tort claims against Chevron. Donziger represented a group of Ecuadorian citizens who sought to hold Chevron responsible for alleged pollution of the Ecuador rain forest. The district court concluded that Donziger obtained a multi-billion-dollar judgment in the Ecuador courts by engaging in racketeering activity, including ghostwriting the court’s decision and bribing the judge to issue it as his own.

Washington Legal Foundation has been involved in the case for several years. WLF’s *amicus curiae* brief, filed last October, argues that the district court judgment is well supported by evidence that Donziger engaged in extortion, wire fraud, money laundering, obstruction of justice, witness tampering, and bribery of foreign officials. It asks the appeals court to affirm the racketeering judgment.

In advance of Monday’s oral argument, WLF issued a statement by Chief Counsel Richard Samp: “Their alleged commitment to a cleaner environment cannot excuse Mr. Donziger’s illegal conduct nor that by the other environmental activists involved in this matter. The continued integrity of our legal system demands that those who are unwilling to abide by the rule of law must be severely punished. Donziger has somehow managed to avoid criminal prosecution thus far, but he should not be permitted to evade civil liability too.”

*WLF is a national public interest law firm and policy center that devotes a significant share of its resources to upholding legal ethics and defending the rule of law against plaintiffs’ lawyer depredations.*