**The Lundin brothers respond to criticism. Depicting us as opportunistic, dictatorship-loving businessmen is to show a complete lack of understanding of Adolf Lundin and the value system he stood for – as well as of the values we continue to stand for today. Those accusations that *Aftonbladet* and certain others have levelled at us are quite simply unfounded and unjust. *Aftonbladet*’s very hard tone merely reveals their own disregard for the principles of serious investigative journalism, write Ian and Lukas Lundin.**

Over the last 10 years the Lundin Group and our family have repeatedly been the target of the Swedish media, of which *Aftonbladet* is the most recent example, in something which looks more like a campaign against us than an example of serious investigative journalism.

**We entirely understand the importance of there being strong and independent media, whose representatives can dig deeper into and scrutinise more closely the activities of companies, including those companies within the Lundin Group – whether it is a matter of Sweden, Canada or countries in Africa. We are open to criticism, and it is possible that over the years we have made mistakes. The kinds of sweeping statements made in the articles published in *Aftonbladet* in recent weeks do, however, depress us deeply, as they contain no concrete factual information, and as their only aim seems to be to defame not merely our family, but also all of our co-workers within the Lundin Group.**

We readily admit that a core of the assertions made by these journalists is correct, namely that companies within our group have been, and are, active in countries whose form of government is not a Western democratic system. One might even call some of them dictatorships. This is, however, nothing that we will ever apologise for, quite the opposite.

**We are convinced that – by being responsible active investors – we are part of a development process that contributes to making life easier for people in Ethiopia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. There are many practical examples of this, but instead of detailing these, we believe that it is more meaningful to take a closer look at the remarkable man who created the group of companies that bears our family name.**

Adolf H. Lundin was a mining engineer in the full sense of the word. He put great credence in the idea of efficient and responsible prospecting and development of natural resources for the good of humankind. This philosophy, combined with an unswerving optimism, would lead and motivate him throughout his life and career. Adolf was convinced that the economic benefits to be had from responsibly developed natural resources have great significance in alleviating poverty and all the ills associated with it.

His vision, combined with a very strong personal belief in hard work and the power of endurance, meant that nothing was impossible for him. Call it courage or blind optimism, but it had a significant effect on the entire raw materials industry. Those companies he founded have created thousands of job opportunities and many grateful shareholders.

**The wealth created as a result of the oil and mining projects of the Lundin Group have benefited innumerable men, women and children, and will continue to give them the opportunity of a better life. Adolf Lundin’s solution to the world’s greatest problems such as poverty, war and disease was economic development. He was actually convinced that these questions were closely connected, and that poverty is the ultimate cause of both disease and war.**

These values and convictions led Adolf to the remotest parts of the world, where poverty often prevailed, despite the fact that the countries in question often possessed substantial natural assets. These deposits were, however, often largely still undeveloped, primarily because of political and logistical problems. Many of these countries were, of course, not functioning democracies of the Western type, in some cases the very opposite.

As regards Ethiopia and Sudan, considerable improvements have taken place there, but even if both of these countries still have a long way to go before poverty and conflict are eliminated, their people have been able to enjoy a previously unimaginable economic growth over recent years. And although armed conflicts are still ongoing in parts of Africa, causing the deaths of thousands of innocent people, peace is spreading across the African continent more rapidly than ever previously in the modern history of that continent.

**We have obviously encountered difficult situations, as we did in Sudan when Lundin Petroleum was operating there, but rather than abandon the region we have always persevered, and have cooperated with the communities in which we are active in order to improve the situation, in doing which we have insisted on peaceful solutions so that we can pursue our operations. We are well aware that in Sweden the international public prosecutors office is conducting a preliminary investigation into possible crimes under international law committed in Sudan. So far, we ourselves and other employees within the Lundin Group have not been called to any interrogations or interviews – but we look forward to collaborating fully if we are asked to do so.**

In our view, there is no doubt that the presence of the Lundin Group has been of benefit to those communities and populations in all the regions where we have been, and still are, active, and we are very proud of our extensive social development projects, which are being carried out both by the various companies within the Lundin Group and under the aegis of the Lundin Foundation.

In areas suffering from extreme poverty, economic development has to be initiated with the help of foreign investments in infrastructure and the development of natural resources. Aid from abroad can unfortunately not do much more than provide a temporary alleviation of acute problems.

**Painting those of us who work within the Lundin Group as opportunistic, dictatorship-loving businessmen is to show a complete lack of understanding for Adolf Lundin and the value system he stood for – as well as for the values we continue to stand for today. Those accusations that *Aftonbladet* and certain internationally active non-profit making organisations have levelled against Adolf Lundin and other members of the family and those men and women who work in companies within the Lundin Group are quite simply unfounded, unjust and in some cases even absurd.**

Thevery hard tone used by, amongst others, *Aftonbladet* has merely served to expose their own disregard for the principles of serious investigative journalism. It may be time for these organisations and individuals to take a closer look at all the aspects of what is really going on in the countries involved, and focus on some of the very positive results achieved as a result of the presence of foreign investors and responsible companies prepared to invest in the future of these countries, despite the risks. While it is easy to stand back and criticise, very few people have the courage to get involved in the type of project that Adolf did, and that we in the Lundin Group continue to get involved in, in the hope of making the world a better place for everyone.

This is why we remain firm in our conviction, and continue to do business in countries of the above-mentioned type, despite the criticisms we have had to suffer and without doubt will continue to suffer in the future.

**We are long-term responsible operators in the raw materials industry, and would therefore like to encourage and participate in the broader debate, both in Sweden and in other places, into how oil and mining companies like the ones in our group can improve still further in promoting economic growth, environmental responsibility and human rights in those regions in which they are active.**

**Ian Lundin**, chairman of the board of Lundin Petroleum
**Lukas Lundin**, chairman of the board of Lundin Mining

*original Swedish article:*

http://www.dn.se/debatt/aftonbladets-enda-syfte-tycks-vara-att-smutskasta