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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
KAMPALA, UGANDA**

**THOUSANDS PETITION TOTAL AND OTHER EACOP PROJECT DEVELOPERS TO  
PRIORITISE CLEAN ENERGY OVER THE EACOP, OTHER OIL PROJECTS**

Thousands of people including directly affected people and civil society organisations (CSOs) have petitioned Total and other developers of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) over concerns that they have as regards the EACOP and other oil projects.

The EACOP is a planned 1,445km pipeline that will be built from Hoima in Uganda to Tanga in Tanzania. It is estimated that the pipeline will transport 216,000 barrels of crude oil per day from Uganda to global markets. The pipeline is being developed by Total, CNOOC (U) Ltd and the Ugandan in addition to Tanzanian governments. Total is currently the lead developer on the project.

Total and CNNOC are also Joint Venture (JV) Partners in the Tilenga and Kingfisher oil projects in Uganda. The EACOP will transport crude oil from the Tilenga and Kingfisher oil fields.

The pipeline and other oil projects are being developed or are set to be developed at a time when Uganda, Tanzania and the world are faced with alarming environmental degradation. Available estimates show that Uganda and Tanzania [lose 122,000 hectares](#) and [372,000 hectares](#) of forest cover per year respectively. The countries also lose [21,000 hectares of wetlands per year](#) and are faced with a [50% wetland encroachment rate](#) respectively. The rate of biodiversity loss in Uganda and Tanzania is also alarming.

Moreover, the crude oil pipeline and other projects are being developed at a time when communities in Uganda and Tanzania are suffering from grave climate change challenges such as flooding and increasing vulnerability to poverty due to climate change impacts such as locust invasions. Yet available estimates indicate that that the EACOP, Tilenga and Kingfisher oil projects will emit over 102 million metric tonnes of carbon per year during the lifespan of the projects.

Further, the EACOP and other oil projects are being developed amidst the abuse of the human rights of over 12,000 EACOP-affected people in Uganda and Tanzania. The rights of tens of thousands of community members affected by the Tilenga and Kingfisher oil projects in Uganda are also being abused.

Faced with the above, on Tuesday November 10, 2020, 877 people and CSOs petitioned Total, CNOOC, and the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC) over the environmental, climate change and social concerns that they have as regards the EACOP among other oil projects.

In addition, by November 4, 2020, 322 Ugandans joined over 1 million people who have signed a [global petition by AVAAZ](#). Through the petition, the people are calling on Total to desist from developing the EACOP project because of the project’s environmental, climate change and social challenges.

Below is a matrix showing the people or institutions that petitioned Total and the other EACOP project developers over the environmental, climate change and social challenges of the EACOP and its twin Tilenga in addition to Kingfisher oil projects:

<b>Category of people</b>	<b>Number</b>
Directly-affected people from over eight oil-affected districts including Buliisa, Hoima, Kakumiro, Kikuube, Kyotera, Masindi, Rakai and Ssembabule	810
National, regional and international CSOs from 19 countries including Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, DRC, Burundi, Togo, Nigeria, South Africa, the Netherlands, UK and others	67
Ugandan petitioners that signed the above-mentioned global petition by AVAAZ as of November 4, 2020. The people joined over 1 million petitioners.	322
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,199</b>

### **CONCERNS**

The petitioners to Total, CNOOC and UNOC, the joint EACOP developers, have a number of concerns. Among these are the potential environmental impacts of the EACOP project which remain unaddressed.

The EACOP and its associated Tilenga and Kingfisher projects have affected or are set to affect **over 31** ecosensitive resources in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and beyond. These include:

- Over **five protected** areas in Uganda and Tanzania including Murchison Falls National Park, Kabwoya Game Reserve, Bugungu Game Reserve, Budongo and Bugoma central forest reserves, Talawai open area, Ruiga River forest preserve and others.
- The headwaters of **over nine major** lakes and rivers in Uganda, Tanzania, the DRC and others including Lake Victoria, Lake Albert, Lake Tanganyika, River Nile, River Congo, River Kafu and others.

- Over **seven Ramsar sites** (wetlands of international importance) including Murchison Falls-Albert Delta, Lake Mburo-Nakivali, Nabajjuzi, Lake Nabugabo, Lutembe Bay, Mabamba bay and other wetland systems.

“The above environmental footprint is too huge. Moreover, the environmental resources that are being affected or are set to be affected are some of the most important ecologically, economically and socially in Uganda, Tanzania and in other states.

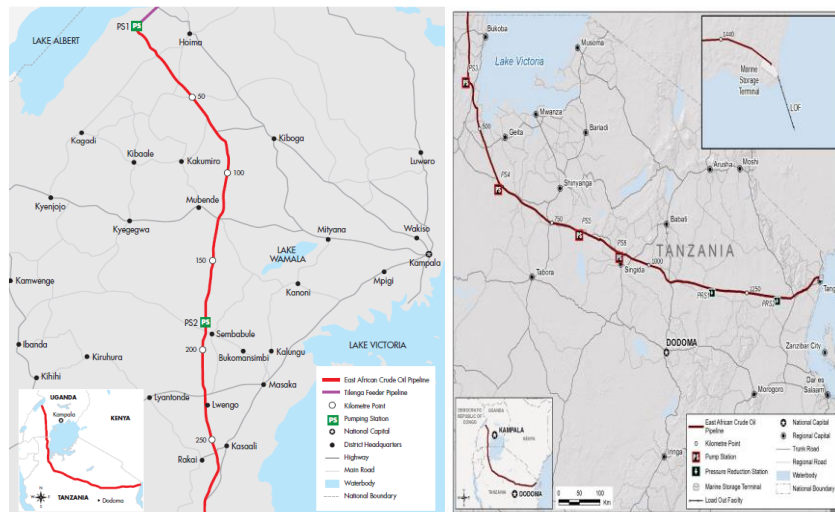
For instance, Murchison Falls National Park is not only Uganda’s oldest and largest park, it is also one of the most visited. It highly contributes to the \$1.6 billion tourism revenues earned by Uganda per year.

In addition, Lake Victoria, the second largest freshwater lake in the world, meets the needs of over 30 million people. The EACOP project developers have proposed to construct one third of the EACOP [about 460km] in the Lake Victoria basin.

Lake Albert is important for water provisioning and in supporting the fisheries sectors in Uganda and DRC. Over 30% of the fish produced in Uganda is from Lake Albert and over 35,420 fishers in Uganda and the DRC rely on the lake to make a living.

To put major national parks, wetlands, rivers and lakes not to mention the livelihoods of millions at risk is as dangerous as it is unacceptable,” AFIEGO’s Mr. Dickens Kamugisha says.

It is notable that the risk of oil spills from the EACOP are considerable considering that the pipeline is going to be developed in the Albertine Rift, a geologically active region that is prone to earthquakes. Over the past 20 years, over 300 seismic events with a magnitude greater than 4.5 have been registered in the Albertine Rift.



**The EACOP path in Uganda and Tanzania. About one third of the pipeline will be constructed in the Lake Victoria basin. The Albertine Rift where the pipeline will pass is also earthquake-prone.**

## **SOCIAL CONCERNS**

Yet the EACOP isn't only dogged by the above environmental and biodiversity challenges. The social challenges are immense too. Between 2018 and 2019, Total placed cut-off dates on the properties of over 5,000 people in Uganda whose land is being acquired to develop the pipeline; over 7,000 people have been affected by the EACOP in Tanzania.

Through the cut-off date, Total stopped the people from using their land to grow income-generating and perennial food crops in addition to stopping them from setting up new developments. To date, the people are yet to be compensated amidst the above limitations. This has left the people impoverished, and the impacts of this increased poverty are being felt by women, parents, children, the elderly and others. Moreover, denying citizens a right to use their property freely before payment of fair and adequate compensation is a violation of Uganda's Constitution.

"Total stopped me from mining sand from my land. Children have returned to school after government eased the COVID-19 restrictions in October [2020] but I cannot take my niece back to school because I don't have money. I feel bad. Her mother died and I am her caretaker. I had educated her up to Senior Four but I am now stuck," Robert, an EACOP-affected petitioner from Kyotera said before signing the petition. His voice trailed off in sadness.

"My father gave me this land before he passed away. I have kept it faithfully but Total came and said that they are taking it away. I said OK though I am very attached to this land. But now, I am likely to die before I receive my money. And, my children will have nowhere to bury me because Total stopped us from constructing new graves. Total should at least pay me so that I can move from this land and have peace," an elderly petitioner, a woman, from Rakai said.

A mother from Ssembabule district thrust her daughter to the camera and said, "Total stopped us from growing food [perennial food crops]. What am I supposed to feed my daughter? Total should pay us so that our children can have some food."

## **CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES**

Other than the above social challenges, the EACOP is set to exacerbate the climate change crisis with estimates showing that over 34.3 million metric tonnes of carbon will be produced per year by the EACOP project alone.

"As a poor country, Uganda is vulnerable to climate change impacts. When events such as flooding occur, government has limited capacity to help citizens. Only recently, Elegu in Northern Uganda flooded and citizens have not received any support. In addition, this year, various districts in Bunyoro and Greater Masaka flooded but government gave the people little to no support. Ugandans should be guarding against climate change.

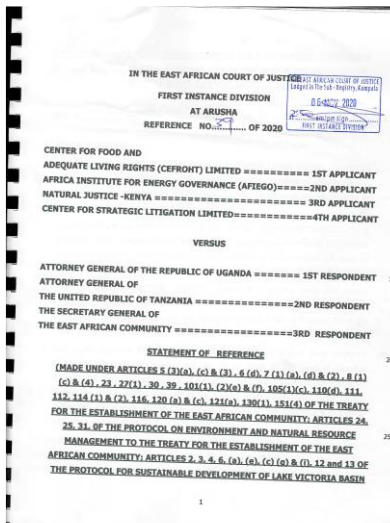
For this reason, we saw scores of people signing the petition to Total, CNOOC and UNOC," AFIEGO's Ms. Diana Nabiruma says.

## **CONCLUSION**

In addition to the petition, four organisations including AFIEGO, Centre for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT), Natural Justice and Center for Strategic Litigation Ltd from Uganda

and Kenya filed a petition in the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) over the environmental, climate change and social concerns of the EACOP project. The petition was filed on Friday November 6, 2020.

“The petition and court case are aimed at the same thing. We want Total in addition to the Ugandan and Tanzanian governments to rethink the EACOP project. Instead of going against climate change science and the wishes of the people, the developers should think green. They should invest in clean energy to save our planet and communities,” Mr. Kamugisha says.



**Top: The petitioners with the court case pleadings before they were filed.**  
**Bottom: The filed court case pleadings.**

**ENDS**

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**Co-ordinators of the petition**

- Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO)
- Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA)
- Guild Presidents Forum on Governance (GPFOG)
- Community Transformation Foundation Network (COTFONE)
- Centre for Constitutional Governance (CCG)
- Citizens Concern Africa (CICOA)
- Centre for Energy Governance (CEG)
- African Initiative on Food security and Environment
- South Western Institute on Policy and Advocacy (SOWIPA)
- Association of oil-affected youth
- AFIEGO and partners' community monitors from the aforementioned eight districts