



March 17, 2023

To: The President of the Council of the European Union (EU),
statsradsberedningen.registrator@regeringskansliet.se

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- The Prime Minister of Sweden: statsradsberedningen.registrator@regeringskansliet.se
- The Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden
- Minister for EU/Prime Minister's office: statsradsberedningen.registrator@regeringskansliet.se
- Minister of Climate and Environment: kn.registrator@regeringskansliet.se
- Minister of Foreign Affairs: utrikesdepartementet.registrator@regeringskansliet.se

Dear Sir/Madame,

RE: REQUEST TO ENGAGE EU COMMISSION & OTHER STAKEHOLDERS TO TAKE ACTION ON RESOLUTION 2022/2826 (RSP) ON THE EACOP AND RELATED PROJECTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The above refers. We, the undersigned, are Ugandan and Swedish youth climate change and environmental activists.

We are writing to you today to seek your good office's support in ensuring that the European Union (EU) Parliament's resolution 2022/2826 (RSP) on violations of human rights in Uganda and Tanzania linked to investments in fossil fuels projects is implemented.

2. BACKGROUND

The [resolution](#) was adopted on September 14, 2022. Prior to its adoption, EU Members of Parliament (MPs) visited Uganda in July 2022 for a fact-finding mission during which they interacted with communities impacted by oil projects, women, youth, civil society organisations (CSOs), religious leaders, the private sector and representatives of the Ugandan government.

Thereafter, a motion for the EU Parliament to adopt the resolution in the subject line was moved on September 13, 2022. The resolution was discussed and adopted on September 14, 2022, as earlier indicated.

Among others, the resolution noted the following about the Lake Albert Development project, which consists of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), Tilenga and Kingfisher oil projects [1] in Uganda and Tanzania:

- (i) The resolution expressed grave concern about the human rights violations in Uganda and Tanzania linked to investments in fossil-fuel projects, including the wrongful imprisonment of human rights defenders, the arbitrary suspension of NGOs, arbitrary prison sentences and the eviction of hundreds of people from their land without fair and adequate compensation;
- (ii) Through the resolution, the EU Parliament recalled that more than 100, 000 people are at imminent risk of displacement as a result of the EACOP project without proper guarantees of adequate compensation;
- (iii) The EU Parliament urged that those evicted or denied access to their land be compensated promptly, fairly, and adequately, as provided for in the Ugandan Constitution and as promised by the companies;
- (iv) Further, through the resolution, the EU Parliament called for the EU and the international community to exert maximum pressure on Ugandan and Tanzanian authorities, as well as the project promoters and stakeholders, to protect the environment and to put an end to the extractive activities in protected and sensitive ecosystems, including the shores of Lake Albert; and
- (v) The MPs also instructed their President to forward the resolution to the Council, Commission, Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European Union Special Representative for Human Rights, the President of the Republic of Uganda, the President of the Republic of Tanzania and the Speakers of the Ugandan and Tanzanian parliaments.

3. INACTION

Since the resolution was passed, we have not seen action being taken by the EU and other relevant authorities to ensure that the recommendations made by the EU lawmakers are acted upon.

Human rights violations against the Lake Albert Development project-affected people continue. In addition, the civic space for those that are campaigning against the project continues to be repressed with arrests being seen.

Furthermore, despite the EU Parliament recommending that TotalEnergies stops implementing the project for one year to consider an alternative route that does not affect as many environmental resources as the current route does, the project is ongoing. This means that immense risks to community health, clean water access and Uganda's key economic activities such as agriculture and tourism remain. We elaborate further below.

4. CURRENT SITUATION

Since the resolution was passed, a number of emerging challenges have been seen, making it imperative for the EU to ensure action on its resolution. These include:

(a) Land rights violations: Compensation-related challenges persist with the Tilenga- and EACOP-affected communities complaining that the compensation rates being offered by TotalEnergies for their land are [low](#). TotalEnergies is acquiring the people's land to set up infrastructure such as a Central Processing Facility (CPF), feeder pipelines, well pads and the EACOP. Communities also report that TotalEnergies' compensation practices are [unfair](#) with future income losses not being factored into compensation. Delayed compensation challenges also still persist with the Ugandan government indicating that as at January 2023, about 40% of EACOP-affected households had not been compensated. It should be noted that over [3,045 households](#) with over 20,631 members are being physically or economically displaced for the EACOP project in Uganda. Failure to pay the Lake Albert Development project-affected persons (PAPs) prompt, fair and adequate compensation is a violation of Article 26 of Uganda's 1995 Uganda Constitution. It is also a violation of key international standards such as IFC Performance Standard 5 on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement. Under their [Land Acquisition and Resettlement \(LAR\) Framework](#) of 2017, the Lake Albert Development project proponents committed to comply with the above-mentioned standard.

(b) Impacts of low compensation: The impacts of low compensation are evident with households that have received low compensation under the EACOP project indicating that they have not been able to replace all the property that they lost. Those who are yet to be compensated also report that they are [afraid](#) that they will not be able to replace all their property because having waited for nearly four years -since 2019- for compensation, the money that they will receive will be greatly reduced because of inflationary pressures.

- (c) **Compelled to take compensation:** It is important to note that many EACOP- and other oil project-affected people report that they feel compelled to accept meagre payment for their land as they feel that they cannot resist low compensation for a big government project. These sentiments were expressed as far back as [2021](#) and their persistence has seen communities accepting low and unfair compensation even when they would not have wanted to.
- (d) **Intimidation:** Reports of intimidation of the project-affected people also persist. In Buliisa district where TotalEnergies is operating for instance, a household being displaced for the Tilenga project reported the use of psychological tactics such as isolation, fencing off of the household's home, denying their animals forage and others to compel the household to accept low compensation. The above was [reported](#) in October 2022. To date, the family is still isolated and is yet to be relocated. The losses that the family has incurred from the Tilenga project activities, such as the loss of animals, are yet to be compensated. Communities also continue to report that they are [intimidated](#) over their human rights work related to the Tilenga and EACOP projects.
- (e) **Inadequate attention paid to vulnerable households:** Under Chapter 5 of the [Resettlement Action Plan](#) (RAP) report for the EACOP project in Uganda, the EACOP project developers identified 819 households that identified themselves as experiencing some level of vulnerabilities. These ranged from illiteracy to being a female-headed or child-headed family. Other forms of vulnerabilities that were documented in the RAP include physical or mental disabilities, suffering from chronic illnesses, being elderly and others. Under the RAP, the EACOP project developers led by TotalEnergies promised to provide assistance such as food to the displaced families. Female-headed families report that despite experiencing increased [food stress](#) due to the EACOP project, they were by March 16, 2023 yet to get food assistance from the EACOP Company. This was despite pleas to the company, which is owned by TotalEnergies (62% shares), CNOOC (8% shares) and the Ugandan as well as Tanzanian governments (15% shares each).
- (f) **Arrests:** The arrest of environmental and human rights defenders (EHRDs) who protest against the Lake Albert Development project continue. When the EU Parliament adopted the resolution that is the subject of this petition, protestors against the resolution, whom the media indicated were [tricked](#), were allowed to march on the streets in Kampala and elsewhere with police escorts. This is unheard of in Uganda as protests are clamped down on. True to form, when those in support of the resolution marched to the EU Delegation offices in Kampala in October 2022, [nine students](#) were arrested. In December 2022, [four EHRDs](#) that were protesting against the EACOP project were also arrested. The students and EHRDs continue to grapple with the court

cases that were instituted against them by the Ugandan state because of participating in peaceful protests.

(g) **Economic risks:** The huge economic risks posed by the Lake Albert Development project to Ugandans still exist. The Ugandan government has borrowed heavily to invest in the oil sector and as at June 2022, Uganda's debt stood at USD [20.99 billion](#). The country's debt to GDP ratio is expected to hit [53%](#) in 2023. Climate change is still identified as a major threat to Uganda's economic growth with Uganda's 2023/2024 [National Budget Framework Paper](#) taking cognizance of this. Sectors such as agriculture, tourism and business that employ the majority of Ugandans are vulnerable to climate change. Amidst the above, the Lake Albert Development project developers are enjoying [tax holidays](#) while the Ugandan government remains cash-strapped and is unable to meet obligations such as paying [teachers](#), [doctors](#) and others. Generally, the value that the companies intend to extract from Uganda is not commensurate to the losses that the country is and will continue to incur due to biodiversity destruction and climate change.

5. OUR REQUEST

Through this petition, we are requesting you to engage the EU Commission, TotalEnergies and the Ugandan as well as Tanzanian governments to stop the destruction brought on by the Lake Albert Development project. We remain hopeful that that you will have engaged the Commission and will share an update with us through Youth for Green Communities (info@ygcug.org) on the processes being taken to implement the resolution that is the subject of this petition by **April 30, 2023**.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

We request you to kindly keep the signatories below confidential. Ugandan EHRDs work in a repressive environment and we remain confident that you will support their protection by keeping the names of the signatories below confidential.

Thank you!

SIGNATORIES

No.	Organisation	District/Youth group represented	Contact
1.	Youth for Green Communities	University youth promoting environmental conservation	info@ygcug.org

2.	Environmental Shield	National/Youth advocating for improved civic space	kiizaeron@gmail.com
3.	Center for Environmental Research and Agricultural Innovations	Youth engaged in agriculture	info@ceraiug.org
4.	Centre for Citizens Conserving Environment and Management	Kasese district/Youth promoting clean energy access	info@ceciug.org
5.	African Initiative for Food Security and Environment	National/Youth promoting food security	info@aifeuganda.org
6.	Environment Governance Institute	National/Youth promoting environmental and biodiversity conservation	info@egiuganda.org
7.	Women for Green Economy Movement	Hoima district/Women promoting green economic alternatives	info@wogemuganda.org
8.	East African Crude Oil Pipeline Host Communities	Kikuube district/Youth and women affected by EACOP project	info@eacophc.org
9.	Strategic Response on Environmental Conservation	Hoima/Youth promoting environmental conservation	info@strec.org
10.	Guild Presidents' Forum on Governance	National/University guild presidents	gpfoguganda@gmail.com
11.	StopEACOP Uganda	National/Youth advocating against the EACOP project	--
12.	Tasha Research Institute Africa	Buliisa district/Youth advocating for protection of Tilenga-affected communities' rights	https://tashacommunity.org
13.	Buliisa Peace Development Initiative	Buliisa district/Youth advocating for protection of Tilenga-affected communities' rights	sunshinenalule@gmail.com
14.	Greenery Environmental Research Centre-Uganda	National/Youth promoting environmental conservation	--
15.	Aurora	Swedish youth climate	info@auroramalet.se

		change activists	
16.	Fridays for Future-Europe	European climate change activists	--

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- The President, EU Commission
- Chair of the Petitions Committee, EU Parliament
- Head of Delegation, EU in Uganda
- The Ambassador, Swedish embassy in Uganda

[1] The Tilenga, Kingfisher and EACOP oil projects are operated by France’s TotalEnergies, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and the Ugandan as well as Tanzanian governments. TotalEnergies is leading on development of the Tilenga and EACOP oil projects.