



Tete Declaration

Environmental Justice and Human Rights activists representatives from communities affected by coal mining in Mozambique, South Africa, Botswana and Sweden met in Tete, Mozambique, on the 3rd and 4th of November 2016, to discuss the impacts of coal mining in Southern Africa and to ponder on the responses needed to address these impacts.

At the end of the deliberations, it was agreed that Africa and its resources are being plundered, its peoples are being oppressed and their dignity as humans is being put in question. The meeting also noted that the environment in the areas of mining activity has also been affected and destroyed drastically, contributing to environmental and climatic injustice. The meeting considered that Africa has been massively looted over the centuries and continues to suffer the severe impacts of resource exploitation and related conflicts.

The meeting also noted that the abuses of human and environmental rights in southern Africa adversely affect its peoples and impair their ability to live in a healthy and harmonious environment, damaging their health and withdrawing the possibility of a healthy future for the coming generations.

The growing gap between our governments and grassroots organizations and local communities has also been condemned, as well as the increasing corporate capture of African governments and public institutions, which has increasingly been representing and defending the private interests of corporations instead of the interests of the people. These facts constitute obstacles to obtaining social, economic, environmental and climate justice for our peoples.

We understand that the long road to social and environmental justice requires the mass education of our people, as well as of the political decision makers on the real impacts and problems of mining, and the vigorous affirmation of our rights. It also calls for collective and popular struggles to resist the unjust system and neocolonialism, new forms of oppression and new manifestations of violence, including the criminalization of activists, social movements and any other form of organization aimed at the defense of human and environmental rights.

With justice and equality as the irreducible minimum, the meeting further noted and stated the following:

1. All nations and peoples should act together to ensure the protection of human rights, social and environmental justice and human dignity;

2. We reject any form of oppression of peoples and persecution of activists, especially of local communities;
3. We demand the end of any oppressive and unjust system;
4. We say no to mining since we lived better without extreme extractive activities;
5. Our land is our present and future and we reject the grabbing of land in all its forms, especially the so-called "investment" projects that are paving the way for usurpation of land for a total usurpation of the continent;
6. Prior to the use of their lands for any type of project, there shall be a full, transparent and informed consent of the communities;
7. In all cases, the well being of local communities and the environment should take priority over the profits of investment companies.

In this way, the participants of the meeting make the following demands:

1. Governments should ensure that the needs, interests and priorities of local people and families, local producers and women – including in social services, transport, health, education and childcare - should be prioritized over the multinational corporations and private interests of political and economic elites;
2. We demand that, in order to preserve our environment and to stay in line with the demands of science, no new coal mining licenses are granted, so that fossil fuels are left underground to avoid catastrophic climate change;
3. We demand that communities directly affected and civil society are involved and participate in negotiations and decision-making processes on projects to be implemented in their communities;
4. Governments should act to defend the rights and interests of their peoples;
5. Governments should support food production and ensure the rights of communities over land, in order to promote food security in the context of food sovereignty. We recognize the land as a common good and everyone should benefit from it;
6. The right to clean water must be respected in all African countries;
7. Governments should halt the privatization of water and restore public control, including the already privatized reserves;
8. Governments have a duty to hold corporations accountable for the environment and ecosystems degraded by historical or ongoing pollution and extractive activities. Corporations responsible for the degradation of the environment or ecosystems should have to pay for their restoration, but this payment must not give them any rights over these areas;

9. Governments should ensure that the costs of social and health illnesses resulting from mining activities cannot be outsourced to people and the environment;

10. Governments should assume responsibility for providing hospitals, schools and other social services and should not allow companies to provide them as part of their corporate social responsibility program or any other act of *green washing*;

11. Governments and corporations must restore dignity and justice to unjustly resettled people, just as they did in other parts of the world;

The participants of the Conference decided to work with other movements in Africa and the World to overthrow the capitalist oppressive system promoted and protected by global financial institutions, corporations and the global elite to ensure the survival of human beings and the right of Mother Nature to maintain her natural cycles.

Tete, November 4, 2016

Signatures:

1. Cateme Natural Resources Management and Development Comity – Cateme Community, Tete
2. Cassoca Community – Marrara District, Tete
3. 25 de Setembro Community – Moatize District, Tete
4. Mualadzi Natural Resources Management and Development Comity – Mualadzi Community, Tete
5. Benga Community – Tete
6. Ntchenga Community – Tete
7. Brick Makers Association – Tete
8. Chipanga Community - Tete
9. Mining Impacted Peoples Association - Tete
10. Kubecerra Association – Tete
11. Youth Parliament – Tete
12. Association for Legal Support and Assistance of Communities – Tete
13. Paralegal women Association – Tete
14. Provincial Farmers Union – Tete
15. KEPA - Maputo
16. Botswana community activists against coal - Botswana
17. Earthlife Africa (ELA)– Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa
18. groundWork (gW), Friends of the Earth South Africa – Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa
19. Highveld Environmental Justice Network (HEJN)– Highveld region, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa
20. Justica Ambiental (JA!), Friends of the Earth Mozambique – Maputo, Mozambique,
21. Khwezumkhono Environmental Justice Network (KEJN)– Newcastle, KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa

22. Mfolozi Community Environmental Justice Organisation (MCEJO) – Fuleni, KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa
23. Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance (VEJA)– Vaal region, Gauteng Province, South Africa,
24. Nthule Morwalo - Waterberg region, Limpopo Province, South Africa
25. Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC)– Sweden