

#STOPEACOP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POLICE VIOLENTLY ARREST ANTI-EACOP ACTIVISTS IN KAMPALA; HOIMA RESIDENTS BLOCKED FROM ACCESSING EACOP OFFICES

KAMPALA, Uganda (Aug. 26, 2024) — Police in Hoima blocked over 300 oil-Project Affected Persons (PAPs) who had gathered at Kitara Secondary School with the intention to march to the offices of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) company to deliver a letter outlining their grievances. Meanwhile in Kampala, activists associated with a students climate movement and civil society activists protesting in solidarity with these PAPs were violently arrested as they planned to march to TotalEnergies Offices and the Ugandan Parliament.

The police in Hoima allowed a few of the PAPs to present the letter while forcing the rest of the protestors to go back home in complete violation of their right to protest and demand accountability. The letter outlined their concerns including compensation, displacement, environmental degradation and the lack of meaningful consultation.

In Kampala the situation was different as the police arrested 21 protestors including some of the PAPs from Hoima who travelled to the capital to voice their opposition to the controversial EACOP alongside the activists. This unjustifiable use of force against peaceful demonstrators highlights the escalating crisis of arrests, violence, threats, harassment, and intimidation faced by land, human rights, and environmental defenders in Uganda.

Call for Immediate Action

We call on the international community to take a firm stand against these injustices. Global actors must pressure the Ugandan authorities to end the violence, respect the rights of affected communities, and engage in meaningful dialogue with those demanding justice and a sustainable future.

The voices of the people must not be silenced. The EACOP project, with its far-reaching environmental and social impacts, must be halted. We stand in solidarity with communities

across Uganda who are bravely resisting this destructive project. Their demands for justice, renewable energy, and environmental preservation must be heard.

Core Demands of the Protestors

- **Immediate Halt of the EACOP Project:** Stop all EACOP-related activities until the grievances of affected communities are addressed.
- **Reparations:** TotalEnergies and CNOOC must pay reparations for the environmental and social damage already caused.
- **End the Violence:** Stop the arrests, harassment, and intimidation of land, human rights, and environmental defenders.
- **Meaningful Engagement:** Authorities must engage in genuine consultations with affected communities about their demands for justice and renewable energy alternatives.
- **Transition to Renewable Energy:** The Ugandan government must prioritize decentralized, community-owned renewable energy solutions that align with the needs and aspirations of the people.

Quotes:

“Today we have experienced another set of injustices. As oil-affected communities, who have been demanding for our concerns to be addressed, we have not been getting any answer. This, alongside the continued harassment and threats our community members have been facing for a long time for speaking out, is why we decided to mobilise ourselves to deliver our petition to the EACOP offices in a very peaceful manner. Unfortunately, we were blocked by the security forces including the Hoima RCC, the Kikuube RDC and other police organs who stopped us from delivering our petition. It is an injustice that we continue to experience this sort of disrespect as communities who are impacted by EACOP and who have lost our livelihoods and our land.” - **Balach Bakundane, Community Organiser - EACOP Host Communities Organisation**

“We unequivocally condemn these arrests and the ongoing repression of peaceful protestors in Uganda. We demand the immediate release of all those arrested today in Kampala and an end to the violent suppression of community voices. These actions are part of a broader and deeply concerning pattern of state-sanctioned violence and intimidation against those who dare to speak out against the EACOP project. The Ugandan government's willingness to prioritise the interests of multinational corporations over the rights and well-being of its citizens is not only reprehensible but also a gross violation of human rights.” - **Brighton Aryampa, Environmental and Human Rights Lawyer**

“We shall not quit or back down till the concerns of our communities and environment are addressed. Instead of arresting us while exercising our constitutional right to freely

assemble, petition, and express our opinions, the government and oil companies should address the concerns we are raising . We don't have room for new pipelines in Uganda and Africa.” - **Barigye Bob, Chairperson - StopEACOP Activists Task Force**

“We came with many people from different communities that are affected by EACOP and wanted to present our letter to the EACOP project officials. As soon as we got there to the gathering point the police surrounded us within minutes and were questioning us. We are not happy with how they have treated us and refused us an opportunity to peacefully demonstrate. Even though a small group of us were able to take our letter to the EACOP offices and were able to talk to the RCC, it is wrong that they have sent us away without giving all of us the chance to come forward and voice our concerns and express our frustrations through peaceful protest to demand that we are taken seriously and are no longer ignored even after all the hardship we have endured because of EACOP.” - **Rachael Tugume, EACOP Project-Affected Person, Hoima District**

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For media inquiries, contact:

Abiud Onyach
Digital and Communications Lead
StopEACOP Campaign
info@stopeacop.net | +254700593687

Notes to editos:

Photos and videos can be found [here](#).

About the StopEACOP Campaign

The StopEACOP Coalition is an alliance of local groups, communities, and African and global organisations. The coalition has been calling for a stop to the proposed pipeline and associated oil fields at Tilenga and Kingfisher. The StopEACOP Campaign is gathering momentum, building pressure on the remaining supporters and financiers of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). To date, [27 banks](#) and [29 \(re\) insurers](#) have already ruled out support for EACOP.