

Resolution on violations of human rights in Uganda and Tanzania linked to investments in fossil fuels projects

2022/2826(RSP) - 15/09/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on violations of human rights in Uganda and Tanzania linked to investments in fossil fuels projects.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew groups and Members.

The Lake Albert Development project consists of several partners, with the French multinational oil company TotalEnergies (Total) as the main investor, together with the China National Offshore Oil Corporation, the Uganda National Oil Company, and the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation. The production from the project will be delivered to the port of Tanga in Tanzania via a cross-border pipeline, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP).

The EACOP was launched on 1 February 2022 and is planned to be complete by 2025. The construction and operational phases are expected to cause serious adverse impacts for communities within the oil extraction and pipeline areas.

The resolution underlined 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.

Parliament 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. It expressed concerns about the arrests, acts of intimidation and judicial harassment against human rights defenders and NGOs working in the oil and gas sector in Uganda and called for all arbitrarily arrested human rights defenders to be released immediately.

Both the governments of Uganda and Tanzania should initiate concrete measures to ensure that authorities, security forces and policies respect and comply with human rights standards.

Furthermore, Parliament reiterated its call:

- to compensate promptly and fairly those evicted or denied access to their land;
- on Ugandan authorities to allow free, meaningful and unhindered access to the oil zone for civil society organisations, independent journalists, international observers and researchers;
- for a strong and ambitious directive on mandatory corporate due diligence and an ambitious legally binding international instrument to cope with human rights, environment and climate obligations.

The EU and the international community are called on 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 commit to using the best available means to preserve the culture, health, and future of the communities affected and to explore alternatives in line with international climate and biodiversity commitments.

Parliament called on the promoters of the EACOP project in Uganda and Tanzania to resolve all disputes that should have been resolved prior to the launch of the project. It urged TotalEnergies to take one year before launching the project to study the feasibility of an alternative route.

Lastly, Parliament expressed its concern about the growing economic influence of China and Russia, in particular in the energy sector and by the interest of Ugandas authorities in developing a nuclear power plant with Russian assistance.