

To: Total, Exxon Mobil, Shell, Eni, Galp, HSBC, Standard Bank, US Exim and the Mozambique government

Cc: the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the United Nations Rapporteur for Human Rights

STOP THE RAVAGING OF CABO DELGADO

Cabo Delgado is being ravaged. And it's clear who is responsible.

The gas industry is causing devastation in this northernmost province of Mozambique, with communities starving and landless, even before any gas has been extracted.

The transnational fossil fuel corporations, contractors, private financiers, risk consultancies along with the government of Mozambique are turning the wheels of this industry. All are complicit.

Transnational fossil fuel corporations boast of the 'development' and 'upliftment' the gas industry will bring to Mozambique. They talk about the 150 trillion cubic feet of gas that has been discovered and how they are looking for more. But the promises they have made to Cabo Delgado's communities - providing employment for thousands, land compensation to continue farming and maintain livelihoods, better education and healthcare for the peoples through income the government receive - these promises have not been fulfilled and the impacts will far outstrip the benefits, present and future.

Instead the province is sinking into ruin and the presence of transnational corporations is only detrimental. Foreign investment is not imperative for developing countries like Mozambique. History has shown that foreign fossil fuels investment does little to help poor countries develop, it is more often detrimental. Mozambique has hosted an international extractive industry for years, yet only one third of the country has access to electricity. In 2018 Mozambique ranked 180 out of 189 on the Human Development Index (HDI). The complicity and impunity continues even as a huge debt scandal erupted in recent years, including Credit Suisse, Russian bank VTB, mercenary Erik Prince and the Mozambican government.

For almost three years, brutal attacks by insurgents and extremists have devastated entire communities in Cabo Delgado, with no end in sight. The attacks are now constant. Over 100,000 people have been displaced after their villages have been burnt to the ground, and young women have been kidnapped, with many missing for months. Extremism in Cabo Delgado has been attributed in part to young peoples' anger at the mass unemployment, land grabbing, loss of livelihoods and oppression they have endured as they watch foreigners and political elites living in privilege and wealth around them. The gas industry has emboldened a culture of impunity, corruption and disregard for human rights.

In response to the violence, the government has dispatched the military, instilling yet more fear in the very communities they are meant to be protecting. Communities have spoken of soldiers abusing their power, imposing random curfews and physically assaulting the peoples who are already suffering. In reality, the military are in Cabo Delgado to protect the gas industry, not the peoples. Over the past three years there has only been one insurgent attack on a company. Exxon Mobil and Total called on the government in February 2020 to deploy more troops solely for the industry's protection.

On top of this terror, the gas industry has pushed people into poverty. Land grabbed for the construction of the Afungi LNG Park to support the gas industry has forced 550 fishing and farming families out of their homes, stripping them of their farmland and cutting off their access to the sea. Contractors have razed entire villages to the ground, leaving communities without livelihoods and creating a food crisis. Due to the extremist attacks in the area, those with land fear leaving the village to farm, as they may be attacked by extremists, or mistaken for extremists by the military.

In May 2019 the Mozambique LNG Project, led by US company Anadarko, was handed over to Total when it acquired assets from the US corporation in Africa. Executives from Shell, Total and Eni then used this as an excuse to deny responsibility for these impacts because, they claim, it was

Anadarko who started this construction process. Responsibility for the impacts of all related construction works sits with all transnational corporations involved.

It is the gas industry that brought the deadly COVID-19 virus to the Cabo Delgado province of Mozambique. A foreign Total worker tested positive at the beginning of April. Thanks to the lack of vigilance on the part of Total, its LNG construction site is now the epicentre of Mozambique's COVID-19 crisis, accounting for two thirds of Mozambique's cases. Total's infected employees are isolated on site, but cooks, cleaners, security guards and other staff are brought in from the surrounding villages daily to serve Total employees. While Total has started to test their employees, inadequate efforts have been made to test and protect the communities in the surrounding areas.

All the contractors who are riding on the back of the gas companies - Shell with its gas to liquid plant, Yara with its fertiliser plant, Technip and Samsung and the many engineering companies and suppliers taking advantage of gas exploration - are in part responsible for the impacts of these companies.

These transnational corporations spend millions on greenwashing while simultaneously signing new fossil fuel concession agreements with the Mozambican government. Their so-called 'independent' environmental impact assessments show the terrible and irreversible impact the gas industry in Mozambique will have on the climate, claiming these impacts "cannot be mitigated". This does not fit with the decarbonisation plans they pride themselves on.

These transnational corporations claim to support conservation efforts. Yet the Quirimbas Archipelago, a UNESCO Biosphere off the coast of Cabo Delgado, and home to dozens of endangered coral and fish, will be irreversibly devastated by gas exploitation, a point made clear in the environmental impact assessment.

Journalist Ibrahim Abu Mbaruco, has been missing since April 7. His last message was one informing his mother that the military had arrested him, and many presume he is dead. Many journalists working in Cabo Delgado, especially those in the gas region, have been arrested or detained without charge over the last two years, some for months. A vocal community member, Mr Selemene of Palma, disappeared on 20 May 2020, 24 hours after speaking out against the mistreatment and heavy-handed nature of the military in the area. He is still missing at the time of writing.

To the government of Mozambique we ask, how can you let this happen to your peoples and to your environment? Why do you let these powerful transnational corporations take and exploit, leaving destruction in their wake? Your peoples trust you with the future of the country and to provide the opportunities for dignified lives, and yet you are only hurting them. You do not need foreign investment into fossil fuels, there is more than enough opportunity for a renewable, locally-owned energy system. Do not become another country that falls into the 'resource curse' that lets the wealthiest one percent of the world devastate the everyday peoples who are left in the dark.

The global energy system is broken and unjust. The destructive impacts of dirty energy sources, such as gas, fall disproportionately on the poorest and most vulnerable groups in society, while elites and transnational corporations reap significant benefits from the system in terms of profits, power and access to energy. This extractivist approach is rooted in an unjust neoliberal capitalist political and economic system.

Gas extraction in Mozambique is fuelling human rights abuses, poverty and the spread of COVID-19. It will also fuel catastrophic climate change. Mozambique is a vulnerable country on the frontline of climate impacts - hit hard by two cyclones in close succession in 2019.

When will the assassinations of activists, corruption, fraudulent elections, land grabs and human rights abuses become reason enough to stop put an end to corporate impunity in Mozambique and other parts of the world?

Demands to transnational corporations, purchasers and investors:

- We demand that all transnational companies, all purchasers and all international investors involved in gas extraction in Mozambique cease all activities right now.

Demands to the Mozambican government:

- We demand that the Mozambican government stops gas and fossil fuels exploitation in Mozambique: awarding no more concessions and choosing a path of peoples-based renewable energy instead, since the current energy path is destroying the peoples' livelihoods, the environment and exacerbating the climate crisis. We demand that the Mozambique government ceases putting transnational corporations ahead of the well-being of its peoples.
- We demand that the Mozambique government releases journalist Ibrahim Abu Mbaruco and community member Mr Selemane, and opens a transparent investigation into the reasons for their disappearances.
- We demand that the Mozambique government ceases all random arrests and detentions of journalists, activists and innocent civilians, ends media censorship and quells the atmosphere of fear.

Demands to the oversight bodies:

- We demand that the United Nations Rapporteur for Human Rights, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights investigate the violent situation in Cabo Delgado and hold the Mozambican government and the fossil fuel corporations to account for their crimes. Only by forcing the the government and the corporations to deal with inequality and injustice, will the region will see stability returned.
- We demand justice and reparation for the peoples of Cabo Delgado and that the transnational corporations be held to account.
- We demand a strong and effective international legally binding instrument on 'transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights', that guarantees access to justice to victims of violations and holds these corporations accountable. We demand rights for people, rules for business.