

# POSITION PAPER

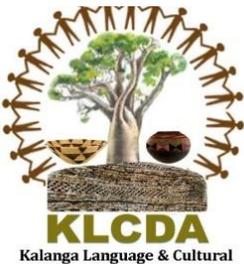
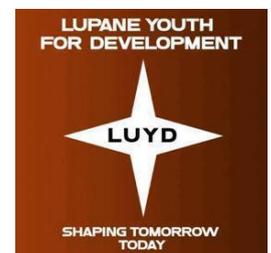
## NATIONAL SOLIDARITY STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED EVICTIONS AND DISPLACEMENTS OF ZIMBABWE'S ETHNIC, LINGUISTIC AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE EXTRACTIVE, AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY

*Presented on 16 September 2021 by:*



PRESENTED JOINTLY AT THE 15 – 16 SEPTEMBER 2021 NATIONAL SOLIDARITY INDABA

WITH:



### Contacts:

Khumbulani Maphosa

Matabeleland Institute for Human Rights (MIHR)

Office 8 – 125 R. Mugabe Way, Bulawayo

Email: [mihroffice@gmail.com](mailto:mihroffice@gmail.com)

Cell: +263 771 730 018

<https://matabelelandinstituteforhumanrights.org/>

## **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2018, the Government of Zimbabwe adopted Vision 2030 as a 12-year development policy thrust which seeks to transform the country ***“Towards a Prosperous and Empowered Upper Middle Income Society by 2030, with Job Opportunities and a High Quality of Life for its Citizens”***.

Key among the driving thrusts of the Vision 2030 agenda include:

- Creation of an open, efficient and effective business environment that fosters entrepreneurship and attracts higher flows of foreign direct investment ensures sustained value addition and export led growth.
- High economic and social impact flagship projects, by both Government and the private sector, are envisaged to take the lead in generating increased business activity or Vision 2030 rapid and inclusive growth.
- Focus on promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, equitable development and prosperity for all, under a market economy that leverages on Zimbabwe’s natural resources and abundant human skills.

Three years after the adoption of Vision 2030, Zimbabwe’s ethnic, linguistic and indigenous communities are facing a plethora of human rights violations due to government led development and extractive investments. Between the period of years 2019 and 2021, the government orchestrated international investment and development initiatives have resulted in over 73 524 people either being actually displaced or risking evictions and displacements by mining, agriculture, urbanization and development initiatives across the country; over 4 999 households being under threat of evictions/displacements; and more than 23 440 hectares of land to be taken from communal and peasant farmers.

Committed to the just and sustainable development of Zimbabwe and concerned about the continued displacements and relocations of our communities, we the representatives of different affected ethnic, linguistic and indigenous communities of Zimbabwe met on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2021 for a National Solidarity Indaba and this Position Paper is the outcome of our deliberations.

## **2.0 CONTEXT**

Different ethnic, linguistic and indigenous communities of Zimbabwe across the length and breadth of the country, are either currently facing gross human rights violations or have already experienced them as a consequence of the country’s development trajectory. These violations include forced displacements; land dispossession; livelihoods disruptions; pollution of water and environment; abuse of workers’ rights; threats and arrests of frontline human rights defenders; as well as violation of cultural rights.

Some examples of the current violations of between years 2019 to-date include:

- 2.1 **Chigomba District:** about 800 villagers from Manhize face eviction due to iron ore and carbon steel plant by the Tsinghan Holdings, a Chinese company.
- 2.2 **Murehwa:** about 39 House-holds face eviction as 300 hectares of land will be taken by a Chinese company called Heijin for Black Granite extraction.
- 2.3 **Domboshava:** an estimated 20 000 people face eviction due to quarry mining by a Chinese company called China Aihua Jianye in an area of about 5km radius.

- 2.4 **Hwange District:** about 3 600 villagers (from 600 households) face eviction due to coal mining extraction by Beifa Investments, a Chinese company.
- 2.5 **Hwange District:** about 100 homesteads from Jembwe, Jabula, Kasikili and Kanywambizi communal lands face eviction due to the establishment of the of Batoka Township.
- 2.6 **Binga District:** about 502 households with an estimated population of 2 422 villagers face eviction from Binga wards 1 and 2 due to the Gwayi – Shangani Lake being constructed by a Chinese company China International Water and Electric Corporation (Pvt) Ltd. Also to be affected are 60 boreholes, 2 primary schools and a secondary school.
- 2.7 **Beitbridge:** about 34 202 people from wards 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are set to loose over 4 000 hectares of Shobi Block to Schweppes Company for a Citrus plantation.
- 2.8 **Chiredzi District:** about 12 500 people from 2 258 househods in Chilonga are set to be evicted and loose about 12 940 hectares of communal land to Daindary Company which wants to set up a Lucerne plantation.
- 2.9 **Mutoko District:** about 1 500 Households are set to be evicted to pave way for a Black Granite extraction project by the Chinese company – Shanghai Haoying Mining Investments.
- 2.10 **Chivhu:** hundreds of villagers set to be evicted in Chikomba ward 7 and lose 12 000 hectares of land to a Chinese company – Dinson Iron and Steel Company (a subsidiary of Tsingshan Group Holdings) due to iron and steel extraction.

### **3.0 IMPACT OF THE RELOCATIONS AND DISPLACEMENTS**

The impact of these relocations and displacements goes beyond the statistics of number of households, people, schools, boreholes, animals and size of land to be lost. Relocations and displacements result in:

- (a) Loss of arable farming land for the community members. This is the land they have been nurturing and fertilizing for a long period of time, in some cases for over 50 years now.
- (b) Disruption of social, cultural and religious values and systems of local people which they have nurtured and passed on for generations and generations as local identity symbols.
- (c) Psychological trauma and stress to all the community members (women, men, youths, children and the elderly);
- (d) Loss of livelihoods, indigenous knowledge systems and adaptive capacities of the local indigenous and ethnic communities which in-turn worsens poverty and vulnerability.
- (e) Destruction of social, cultural, religious and environmental ties of the local communities. These ties are a strategic community asset which enables the resilience of the ethnic and indigenous communities.
- (f) Distortion and disruption of community leadership systems and mechanisms thus exacerbating inter and intra community conflicts.
- (g) Worsening feelings and attitudes of hatred and xenophobia against international investors and their workers.

### **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The government of Zimbabwe fully adopt and adhere to the United Nations Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-based Evictions and Displacement.
- 4.2 The government of Zimbabwe adopt human rights based approach to development and extractives as it pursues its Vision 2030 agenda and specifically:
  - i. Adopt the United Nations Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles;

- ii. Adopt the Business and Human Rights Principles;
  - iii. The Do No Harm Principles
  - iv. Be cognizant of the Provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or **Ethnic**, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.
  - v. The Zimbabwean government adopt and domesticate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas
  - vi. Recognize the Right to Development as a fundamental human right.
- 4.3 Before any relocation or displacement of people is done, there should be a joint assessment of the three Constitutional Commissions, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC), the Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC) and the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC). The Human Rights Impact Assessment Report of these Constitutional Bodies should be presented to Parliament for ratification. Such a joint assessment should consider:
- a) Social, economic and cultural rights violations to be caused by the displacements/relocations;
  - b) The adherence of the Relocation/New Settlement Strategy to the principles of Do No Harm, basic human rights standards and the FPIC principles.
  - c) The appropriateness of the compensatory model to fundamental principles and ethics of administrative justice and fairness taking into consideration the social, economic and cultural assets values of the affected communities.
- 4.4 The relevant Parliamentary Portfolio Committees should be mandated to visit the affected communities before and after relocations to ensure that appropriate policy and action measures are being taken to alleviate gross human rights violations.
- 4.5 In every area where an extractive pr development initiative will cause displacements of villagers, there should be, through the office of the District Development Coordinator and the relevant local authority, a multi-stakeholder human rights integrity adhoc committee which shall comprise of the local authority, the relevant government departments, the local leadership of the affected and relevant civic society organizations working in the area. This Committee should ensure that human rights principles and standards are adhered to.
- 4.6 The country’s Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) laws need to be amended and specifically consider:
- (a) All EIA consultations be mandated to include specific consultations with community vulnerable groups such as women, children, youths, people with disabilities and the elderly in their own safe spaces.
  - (b) There should be a threshold of the number of community members to be consulted in a community as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. This threshold should be a proportion of the total population of the area.
  - (c) Setting a criminal charge for by-passing or flouting EIA laws as this may contribute adversely to climate crisis and ecocide.
  - (d) EIA processes should be conducted under the strict adherence to the Free, Prior, Informed Consent principles.
  - (e) Mandating an annual Climate Impact Assessment to be conducted by the Environmental Management Agency.
- 4.7 The government should consider setting up an Environmental Court whose jurisdiction shall be to preside on and trail environmental crimes.

- 4.8 Amendment of the Mines and Minerals Act to ensure that the Act is compliant with the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the principles of human rights justice.
- 4.9 Government to formulate robust and affirmative community benefit from natural resources schemes such as:
- i. In agricultural, the commercial companies such as Dandairy and Schweppes, should consider contract farming models with indigenous locals instead of displacing them.
  - ii. In extractives, communities to acquire loan based share capitals in the extractive ventures which are repaid through offsetting dividends.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Whilst as different ethnic, linguistic, indigenous and geographic communities of Zimbabwe we are keen to support the Government's Vision 2030 thrust and the development efforts that accompany it, we are however conscious that all development efforts should be respectful of our social, economic, cultural and political rights and should adhere to international human rights standards and principles. Our individual and collective rights and identities are more important than flamboyant macro-economic performances and indicators and therefore if development is to extricate us from poverty and vulnerability, it should be respectful of our rights also.

## 6.0 ANNEXURE: PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

NAME OF ORGANIZATION	GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE	CONTACT DETAILS
Binga District Residents Association	Binga District (Matabeleland North Province)	<b>Phone:</b> +263772458192/ 772457575/ 712 763 945 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:bingara.association@gmail.com">bingara.association@gmail.com</a> <b>Twitter:</b> @BingaResidents
Beitbridge Progressive Residents and Ratepayers Development Trust	Beitbridge District (Matabeleland South Province)	<b>Phone:</b> +263 779 673 589/ 773 509 512 / 719 694 720 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:bprradt2020@gmail.com">bprradt2020@gmail.com</a> <b>Twitter:</b> bprradt
Centre for Natural Resource Conflicts	All provinces of Zimbabwe	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:cnrcoffice@gmail.com">cnrcoffice@gmail.com</a> <b>Twitter:</b> NRConflicts
Greater Whange Residents Trust	Hwange District (Matabeleland North Province)	<b>Phone:</b> +263 773 565 946 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:hratrust@gmail.com">hratrust@gmail.com</a> <b>Twitter:</b> @HwangeResidents
Kalanga Language and Cultural Development Association	Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South Provinces	<b>Phone:</b> +263 772 386 385 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@kalanga.org">info@kalanga.org</a> <b>Twitter:</b> KLCDA_Kalanga <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.kalanga.org">www.kalanga.org</a>
Kanyi Redu Development Association Trust	Chipinge and Chiredzi Districts (Manicaland Province)	<b>Phone:</b> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:kredatrust@gmail.com">kredatrust@gmail.com</a>
Lupane Youth for Development	Lupane District (Matabeleland North Province)	<b>Phone:</b> +263 712 535 202 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:lupyouth@gmail.com">lupyouth@gmail.com</a> <b>Twitter:</b> @lupyouth

Matabeleland Institute for Human Rights	Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South Provinces	<b>Phone:</b> +263 771 730 018 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:mihroffice@gmail.com">mihroffice@gmail.com</a> <b>Twitter:</b> @MatHumanRights
Matobo Youth Development Initiative	Matobo and Mangwe Districts (Matabeleland South Province)	<b>Phone:</b> +263 784 046 484 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:descent@matoboyouth.org">descent@matoboyouth.org</a> <a href="mailto:decodecent20@gmail.com">decodecent20@gmail.com</a> <b>Twitter:</b> @MatoboYouth <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.matoboyouth.org">www.matoboyouth.org</a>
Tikobane Trust	Hwange, Lupane, Tsholotsho Districts (Matabeleland North Province)	<b>Phone:</b> +263 783 297 571 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@tikobanezimbabwe.org">info@tikobanezimbabwe.org</a> <b>Twitter:</b> @Tikobane <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.tikobanezimbabwe.org">www.tikobanezimbabwe.org</a>
Turf Resources Conservation Trust	Mhondoro – Ngezi (Mashonaland West)	<b>Cellphone:</b> +263774445230 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:matsvaimunya@gmail.com">matsvaimunya@gmail.com</a>
Zimbabwe Young Women's Network for Peacebuilding	Mashonaland East Province	<b>Phone:</b> +263773 376 460 / 08644305768 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:zywnptoday@gmail.com">zywnptoday@gmail.com</a>