

Delivered by: Dalaria "Baba" Yestas

12th Session on the Expert Mechanism on the Right of Indigenous Peoples

Geneva, Switzerland

17 July 2019

Madam Chair

We would like to acknowledge the support of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples who facilitated the participation of Indigenous peoples from Africa to the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Expert Mechanisms of Indigenous Peoples.

This is an African caucus statement covering 4 regions of Africa namely: East, West, Central, Southern Africa that faced serious problems related to land, expropriation, displacement, and human rights violations and abuses. This statement was created by the following organizations: IPACC, Kalagadi Youth and Women's Development Network, MBOSCUDA, Dewran etc.....

Indigenous people in East Africa continue to face human rights abuses, intimidations, threats and displacements as they defend their livelihoods, land and natural resources. Indigenous communities in Tanzania are being uprooted from their ancestral lands to make way for the wild life spot hunters known as investors. IPs have been beaten, arrested and their homes burned to ashes and women and children are left in the cold for defending their rights.

Climate change has triggered complex natural resources based conflict in several indigenous territories. The indigenous people in conflict situations have had to bear the brunt of human rights abuses. There is need to address these conflict so as to minimize impact on indigenous people.

The emergence of large scale investment and infrastructural development connecting a number of African countries is also threatening indigenous livelihoods and territories.

The indigenous Khoi and San communities in Southern Africa faced similar and interrelated issues to their indigenous counterparts in other parts of Africa. Problems include land expropriation, loss of languages, no political representation and little protection and preservation of traditional knowledge. In the case of Botswana, there is a constant threat of forced relocation from ancestral lands as evidenced in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve.

In the statement we would like to highlight the case of Mbororo pastoralist from Cameroon, who has been caught in the middle of an ongoing war between the government of Cameroon and the Anglophone separatist who are fighting for an independent southern English speaking Cameroon. Members of the Mbororo communities have been the target of assassination, cattle expropriation and kidnapping. Mbororo women are regularly raped, children are forced to become child soldiers and any resistance results in death. It has been documented that over 140 Mbororo people have been killed, 3200 seriously injured, 11232 internally displaced to other regions in Cameroon and Nigeria. The same community in Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria, Ghana and Niger are victims of extra-judicial executions, illegal detentions and in 6 months more than 600 persons were killed in Burkina Faso and more than 5000 internally displaced including women, children and orphans. It is also the case of the Tuareg of Mali and Burkina Faso who suffer from the same issues mentioned above.

In Burundi as well as other central Africa countries, the Batwa communities are facing similar problems to other indigenous communities:

- Lack of land, resources for their livelihood
- They are denied access to their raw materials
- Lack of justice
- Absence of housing
- Nutrition and education

The African caucus therefore recommend the following:

- In the spirit of the African charter to recognized the diversity of African populations including indigenous peoples and in doing so to consider their ratification of ILO 169 and the implementation of UNDRIP
- African states should respect the constitutions of their own countries and adhere to the UN 2030 agenda of not leaving anyone behind
- We urge EMRIP members to consider the cases of human rights violations against indigenous peoples in Africa, and undergo country visits

We thank you