

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC) CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSO) IN SUPPORT OF THE UN BINDING TREATY ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

17th October 2017

The Speaker,
East African Legislative Assembly,
P.O.BOX 1096,
Arusha, Tanzania

Dear Sir,

RE: A CALL TO SUPPORT THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND OTHER BUSINESSES

We civil society organizations of the East African Community (EAC) working on issues of human rights, trade, investment, gender and development wish to call upon the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and the individual EAC partner states policy makers to support the process to put in place a United Nations (UN) Human Rights treaty for Transnational Corporations and other business.

This Treaty on Business and Human rights is an international legally binding instrument which is currently being negotiated to regulate, in international human rights law, the activities of Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises.

The treaty emphasizes the primacy of human rights over corporate rights and interests who are protected in biased and unfair trade and investment laws, policies and agreements. It also establishes a strong framework for corporate accountability to ensure access to justice for affected individuals and communities. The Human Rights Treaty is not only a vital and indispensable step towards the promotion and protection of human rights but also builds on previous efforts and establishes a complementary framework to the existing international human rights instruments.

We therefore wish to call upon you to show leadership and help mobilise the political will of the EAC partner states' governments that is needed to ensure the success of the third session of negotiations for the content and scope of the legally binding instrument of the Human

Rights Treaty. These negotiations will take place from **October 23rd - 28th, 2017**. This session will follow two sessions that were concluded in 2015 and 2016.

We hope that through the full participation of the EAC partner states, a substantive, cooperative, and constructive negotiation will result into concrete and detailed elements of the treaty concerning its content and scope. We hope that the civil society perspectives and proposals will be considered; and that a clear and concise road map for the completion of the negotiations will be agreed upon.

We underline our strong commitment to the process and through you, urge the Governments of the East African Community Partner states to pay attention to this process and focus on the negotiation of the content and scope of the treaty in order to stop “Corporate capture” and balance between investor rights and obligations.

For more information, please contact us on seatini@infocom.co.ug or +256 414 540 856.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Jane S. Nalunga
Country Director,
Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) Uganda

On behalf of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) of the East African Community (EAC)

1. Action Développement et Intégration Régionale (ADIR) Burundi
2. ActionAid International Uganda
3. African Centre for Trade and Development (ACTADE)
4. Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD)
5. Centre for Health Human Rights and Development (CEHURD)
6. Consumer Education Trust (CONSENT) Uganda
7. Center for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Africa (CESCRA)
8. East African Community Civil Society Organizations Forum (EACCSOF)
9. Eastern and Southern African Farmers Forum (ESAFF) Uganda
10. ECONNEWS - Africa Kenya

11. Food Rights Alliance (FRA) Uganda
12. Governance and Economic Policy Centre -Tanzania
13. Haki Madini Tanzania
14. Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER)
15. Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)
16. Kenya Small Scale Farmers Forum (KESSFFC)
17. Land Net - Uganda
18. Society for International Development (SID) Kenya
19. Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) Uganda
20. Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) Kenya
21. Tanzania Trade and Economic Justice Forum
22. The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA)
23. Uganda Consortium for Corporate Accountability (UCCA)
24. Uganda National NGO Forum
25. Youth Plus Policy Network

