

SENGWER ETHNIC MINORITY FOREST INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY

Sengwer Ethnic Minority Forest Indigenous
Community,
Cherangany Hills,
P.O. Box 3894-30200,
Kitale,
4th October, 2014.

Your Excellency,
Hon. Uhuru M. Kenyatta
President of the Republic of Kenya and
Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces
State House, State House Road,
P.O. Box 40530-00100,
Nairobi.

Dear Sir,

**REF: WORLD BANK PLEDGE TO RESOLVE THE LAND ISSUES OF
THE SENGWER FOREST INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY**

Your Excellency, We the undersigned below, humbly bring to your attention our delight and welcome the outcome of the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors meeting of the 30th September, 2014. Thereafter, the Bank's press release on the 2nd October, 2014 in which the Bank President Jim Yong Kim showed willingness to work with the government of Kenya in finding a resolution to the Sengwer land question and indeed the Forest Indigenous Communities of Kenya who have had to endure evictions and bad relationships with the conservation agencies. The conflict between conservation and the rights of the forest indigenous communities need not be there. These communities should be made the custodians of the same forests under the supervision of our conservation agencies resulting in a win-win outcome. This calls for review of conservation and land policies, legislation and laws. Further, there's need for change of mindset of the colonial 'fortress' conservation which failed to recognize these communities traditional lifestyles, economies and knowledge that was and is in harmony with nature for centuries. Surprisingly, this is what is working elsewhere in the globe leading to successful sustainable forest conservation.

Your Excellency, we request you to direct:-

- (i) Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Kenya Forest Service and the Kenya Wildlife Service to adopt new conservation paradigm in which Forest Indigenous Communities are made the custodians of their forests under the supervision of the said conservation agencies.
- (ii) The National Land Commission to actively, effectively and efficiently implement their constitutional mandate of resolving the issues faced by forest dwelling indigenous communities and more so addressing issues of Historical Land Injustices,

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- (iii) Review of the Forest Act 2005 to be in line with Constitution of Kenya 2010 and National Land Policy with active, effective and efficient consultation and participation of Forest Indigenous Communities.
- (iv) Kenya Forest Service to respect the rule of law (Conservatory Injunctive Orders issued by Eldoret High Court in March 2013 with respect to the case filed by Sengwer of Embobut forest) and to **STOP *continued harassment and any other form of forceful eviction and displacement (destruction of property, burning of houses, arrests, intimidation, etc) of members of Sengwer indigenous community from their ancestral homes and lands in Embobut forests.***


Your Excellency, it is important to know that the commitment of World Bank has come at the right time when as a country we are reviewing our land and conservation policies, legislation and laws namely amendments to the Forest Act 2005, Community Land Bill and tackling the issue of historical land injustices. We should adopt a solution in which communities regain rights to their ancestral lands and at the same time we don't lose our forest. This is possible and we think it is the "digital" era of conservation.

Your Excellency, members of Sengwer forest indigenous community living in Embobut forest are NEITHER SQUATTERS NOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs), we are the indigenous peoples - the aborigines - of Embobut forest their ancestral homes - our community land

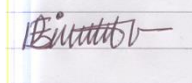
Your Excellency, we look forward for your support as you have shown your keen interest in wanting to do things in a new way and with an interest to resolve challenges facing the less fortunate members of our society, Sengwer community being one of such.

Yours Faithfully,

On Behalf of Sengwer Ethnic Minority Forest Indigenous Peoples by:



Paul K Kibet (0721353944)
Secretary Sengwer Council of Elders
Chair Sengwer Indigenous Peoples Programme



Elias K Kibiwot (0724531616)
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