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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Society for Threatened Peoples, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 August 2022]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania violates international law by evicting the Maasai

On the 8th of June of this year, security forces arrived in Loliondo in the Northern part of the United Republic of Tanzania and initiated the demarcation process of the area. Loliondo, which borders the world-famous Serengeti national park and indeed is the very land some Maasai were sent to after being evicted from the Serengeti in the past, is has been declared the so-called “Pololeti Game Reserve Area” by GN No.421 of 2022. This change of status has very serious consequences for the people living on the grounds. They are facing evictions from their homes as well as the use of disproportional violence against them. The process in which force is used with stiff restrictions to graze on that land has already started and up until this point, at least 30 people have been injured.

Whereas the current evictions seem to be the tip of the iceberg, the human rights violations against the Maasai in this context have a rather long history. The Maasai have been evicted out of the Serengeti area in the 1950s – and during that time it has been stated that they are allowed to live in the so-called Ngorongoro conservation area (NCA). However, as far as we are aware, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania seems to plan the eviction of the Maasai living within the NCA in addition to those living in Loliondo. If these plans were to be implemented, in total approximately 150,000 Maasai would be evicted from their homes (around 70,000 from Loliondo and around 80,000 from the NCA). As mentioned above, the security forces have de facto already started forcibly evicting the inhabitants of Loliondo which has led to human rights abuses against civilians. Additionally, security forces including rangers have been accused of inter alia burning down the so-called bomas (traditional houses) of the Maasai multiple times in the past, for example in 2017, in 2015 and in 2009. Apart from that, several human rights violations were committed during the anti-poaching operation called “Tokomeza Ujangili” in 2013, including severe beatings some of which resulted in the death of the victims as well as rape and torture. The latter is alarmingly current: only recently, in June of this year, some Maasai under detention have stated to their legal counsel that they were tortured on the accusation of publishing information about the current conflicts in Loliondo.

Some of the Maasai who found themselves under detention happen to be Maasai who hold regional political posts. Indeed, several of the Tanzanian citizens who were arrested in the context of the aforementioned conflict regarding the current evictions, are among others councillors of the very four villages (Ololosokwan, Oloirien, Kirtalo and Arash) who successfully filed a complaint on this very issue at the East African Court of Justice in 2017. Subsequently, the court has issued an injunction on the 25th of September in 2018. The latter document includes an interim doth order restraining the respondent, namely the Attorney General of the United Republic of Tanzania, or any persons or offices acting on his behalf, from evicting the residents of the four aforementioned villages from the disputed land, being the land comprised in the 1,500 sq km of land in the Wildlife Conservation Area bordering Serengeti National Park and destroying their homesteads or confiscating their livestock on that land. Furthermore, an interim doth order has been issued restraining the office of the Inspector General of Police from harassing or intimidating the residents of Ololosokwan, Oloirien, Kirtalo and Arash. Based on that, Society for Threatened Peoples argues that the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania violates an injunction of the East African Court of Justice due to the current forceful actions against civilians, including the use of live munition and tear gas, which are implemented by security forces on the grounds.

Moreover, we would like to draw attention to the additional violation of multiple international guidelines regarding the case of the evictions of the Maasai in the United Republic of Tanzania. Despite the fact that the United Republic of Tanzania has voted in favour of the UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, A/RES/61/295) in 2007, several articles of the aforementioned document are violated, inter alia article 7.1, article 8.3, article 19 and article 25. In addition, evidence suggests that the United Republic of Tanzania violates articles 12 and 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as article 3 based on the aftermath of the disproportional use of force which led to the injury and detention of several civilians. Additionally, article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which the United Republic of Tanzania has ratified in

1976, is violated based on the current happenings in the north of the country. In addition, we would like to point out that the United Republic of Tanzania has signed the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (“Kampala Convention”) in 2010, the forceful evictions of the Maasai being a violation of article III 1.a) thereof. However, the United Republic of Tanzania has apparently not ratified the aforementioned document.

Several international human rights bodies, including the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights and Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations, have called on the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to halt the forceful relocation of the Maasai. Nevertheless, despite international condemnation, the security forces continue evicting the residents of Loliondo.

Therefore, the Society for Threatened Peoples calls upon the UN Human Rights Council to:

- urge the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to halt the eviction of the Maasai immediately,
- urge the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to obey to international guidelines as well as court orders based on the injunction of the East African Court of Justice,
- urge the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to ensure that human rights abuses will no longer be happening, especially not in the context of fortress conservation and trophy hunting,
- urge the Government of the United Arab Emirates to pressurize the owner of the Ortello Business Corporation (OBC) to waive the hunting rights or any other form of control over Loliondo or any other area in the United Republic of Tanzania,
- urge the Government Germany to desist from any form of financial support to Tanzanian security forces, including the United Republic of Tanzania National Park Authority (TANAPA) or rangers of the Serengeti National Park, who have been accused of human rights violations,
- urge several Governments, including the members of the European Commission and the Government of the United States of America, to withdraw from their so-called “30 by 30”-plan as the current evictions of the Maasai are an obvious example of what can – and, if the plan was to be implemented, most probably will – happen to several indigenous peoples all over the world once the “30 by 30”-plan is put into practice,
- urge the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to release Maasai who are under detention in the context of the current conflict taking place in Loliondo.