

# #STOPEACOP

**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday 29th November, 2023**

## **Stop EACOP calls for release of Seven Student Activists Remanded at Luzira Maximum Prison for Opposing EACOP**

Kampala, Uganda — On the day before COP28 commences in what should be an effort to accelerate the global renewable energy transition and formulate robust plans to mitigate the harmful impacts of fossil fuel extraction, seven Ugandan student activists have been remanded to Luzira Maximum Prison over their opposition to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline.

On the 24th of November 2023, seven student activists were arbitrarily arrested for peacefully petitioning the Ugandan Parliament against the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project – shining a light on the dangerous dissonance between Uganda’s oil ambitions and urgent climate action. The students were held in police custody for four days before being remanded to the Luzira Maximum Prison after the state prosecutor failed to appear in court yesterday. They will be held at the prison until the 8th of December, 2023.

This incident follows the similar arbitrary arrest and detention of seven other human rights defenders on the morning of Monday, November 20, while delivering materials, including a petition from project-affected people to the Chinese embassy in Kampala. While these activists have been released from police custody, we continue to call for the charges of incitement to violence against them to be dropped. Neither of these recent arrest incidents happened in isolation. They are part of a concerning trend involving the harassment, arrest, brutalisation and general repression of human rights defenders speaking out in opposition to the EACOP project.

As COP28 kicks off, we call on the international community to amplify this issue and uplift the demands to phase out fossil fuels and push for greater renewable energy ambition globally.

As renewable energy presents a safe, sustainable, more just pathway for Africa, we urge Uganda to walk back its retrogressive attacks on those shining light on the dangers of

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EACOP. We call on all media, civil society and human rights institutions to amplify this issue and demand justice for these youth climate leaders wrongfully deprived of their liberty.

## Quotes

“These unlawful arrests, amid the ongoing repression of human rights, environmental and land defenders in Uganda, should serve as a reminder of the violence that is so characteristic of extractive industry all across the world and within the global South and Africa in particular. The COP28 moment should address this - cultivating frameworks designed to end the violence of extraction and which enable tangible restorative justice for communities and impacted persons,” said StopEACOP Coordinator Zaki Mamdoo.

“We strongly condemn using the judiciary to punish those with dissenting views against the EACOP project. Jailing peaceful protestors who were merely exercising their democratic right to petition their elected leaders sets an extremely dangerous precedent,” said Nkurunziza Alphonse, one of the student leaders in Uganda.

“We call for the charges of incitement of public violence laid against the activists to be dropped entirely. The rights of all people who choose to demonstrate and voice their opposition to EACOP peacefully must be upheld and protected by the powers,” said Brighton Aryampa, the lawyer on record.

“We denounce the weaponisation of Uganda’s courts against climate, land and human rights defenders. We call for the immediate and unconditional release of these peaceful student protestors. They are simply asserting themselves as legitimate stakeholders in a project which stands to unravel the social fabric of many Ugandan communities.” said Brian Atuheire, Co-founder & Executive Director AIFE Uganda

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## About StopEACOP

#StopEACOP is a [global campaign](#) against constructing the East African Crude Oil pipeline (EACOP). This proposed 1,443-kilometer heated pipeline will transport oil from Hoima, Uganda, to the port of Tanga in Tanzania. An alliance of local groups, communities, and African and global organisations leads the campaign. The #StopEACOP Coalition has been calling for a stop to the proposed pipeline and associated oil fields at Tilenga and Kingfisher. The #StopEACOP campaign is gathering momentum, building pressure on the remaining supporters and financiers of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline. AEGIS London, Arch Capital Group Ltd and Britam Holdings recently announced they would not offer the project insurance coverage. So far, 27 major banks and 23 major (re)insurers have ruled out support for the pipeline. Some key financial institutions yet to commit to not funding EACOP include ICBC and Standard Bank.