

# AFRICA ACTION SHEET



Spring 2019

## RIGHTS FOR PEOPLE – RIGHTS FOR CORPORATIONS



AEFJN takes part in the alliance of over 150 European organisations, trade unions and social movements, campaigning in favour of corporate accountability rules for companies, and against the **Investor—State Dispute Settlement**, a one sided and unfair justice system which gives priority to the interests of corporations.

**ISDS** creates a business-friendly judicial system exclusively for transnational corporations. It enables a corporation to seek billions of dollars in compensation if it can argue that new laws or regulations made by the defender state negatively affects its expected profits.

More than 270.000 people have addressed the President of the European Commission, the presidency of the EU Council and other EU representatives to alert them on the threats of **ISDS**, stating that it undermines democracy, human rights, the rule of law, environmental protections, health, gender equality, public services as well as consumer and labour rights.

We believe that the current system giving privileges to corporations must be abolished to stop corporate impunity and put people and the planet first. Instead of these VIP rights for corporations, we need a legally binding UN treaty on **Transnational Corporations and Human Rights**, as well as new EU and national legislation to keep corporations accountable, and to ensure access to justice for people and communities affected by corporate abuse.

We call you to join the movement to put an end to these privileged and unjust arbitral courts in the hands of transnational corporations. You can sign the petition here : <https://stopisds.org/action/>

Read more: <https://isds.bilaterals.org/?-the-basics>

Next Meeting of the UK  
Antenna

Tues 26th—Wed 27th  
March 2019

at Wistaston Hall, Crewe.

Details available on the  
website: [aefjn.org.uk](http://aefjn.org.uk)

ALL ARE WELCOME

The Africa Action Sheet is  
produced by the

AFRICA-EUROPE FAITH &  
JUSTICE NETWORK-UK

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We are a Christian organisation promoting life-giving economic relations between Europe and Africa. We share with you some European policies that risk making Africa's poorest even poorer and practical ideas on how to make a difference

### Access to clean water, driven by solar power, is changing prospects in some of the poorest parts of Kenya

Access to clean water remains a struggle for many of rural Kenya's poorest households, with families blaming the problem on everything from a lack of infrastructure to a lack of government commitment to help the country's most marginalised.

But some counties, where rural electrification is widely lacking – are now tapping solar energy to pump water to villages from nearby rivers. The water is then directed into village storage tanks where household members can fetch it free of charge. People have been struggling with water scarcity, even in a county which has three permanent rivers



14 Kenyan counties are also seeing solar power put in place to boost development, including access to water, as part of a World Bank-funded effort. The aim is to use solar energy to bring development to marginalised parts of Kenya, including access to water, lighting and heating. The \$150 million project, was launched in 2017.

Read more: [www.thisisplace.org](http://www.thisisplace.org) 4 January 2019

## ***The Lack of Transparency of European Companies in Africa and the new Action Plan***

AEFJN has begun the implementation of its new **Action Plan for the period 2019-2022**

During the last decade the greater part of the work of the network has focused on **Trade Agreements between the European Union (EU) and Africa**. The influence of civil society has slowed down the conclusion of these agreements and has created greater awareness among the African population of the danger they pose to the economic growth and welfare of the African people.

Now that such threats and the crisis of trade multilateralism has abated **AEFJN is focusing more attention on the behaviour of European companies operating abroad and especially in Africa**.

**Corporate social responsibility** covers many different aspects of a company's activities. **All types of companies must recognise such responsibilities**: extractive industries, agri-businesses, service providers, in fact, any economic activity that operates in a developing country.

Companies generally invest in developing countries either to extract the **scarce natural resources** essential for technological development, or to **ensure the feeding of their own population** or to **obtain tropical agricultural products**.

The responsibility of the companies includes not only their commercial activities but consideration for all the actors affected by them: the host country and its legislation, the needs of the particular location, consultation with the authorities and local population, fair payment of taxes, respect for human rights, and compliance with national and international environmental regulations.

**Read more:** <http://aefjn.org/en/the-lack-of-transparency-of-european-companies-in-africa/>



Fasting from meat during the Lenten season is part of our Catholic tradition. It's a way to live in the humble simplicity that Christ offers us.

**We now know that fasting from meat is also a way to sustainably inhabit our place in God's creation.**

This Lent, we invite you to go beyond fasting from meat on Fridays. Add one more day of plant-based meals to your table or strive to eat plant-based meals throughout the Lenten season. Together, our acts of solidarity add up to better protection for our vulnerable brothers and sisters.

Many of us enjoy meat, and we're grateful for the farmers who make our meals possible. Focusing our diets on plant-based meals and enjoying meat as an occasional treat is a sustainable way of living in our common home.

### **ISDS DISPUTE      AGRO ECOENERGY V TANZANIA**

#### ***Sugar plantation investor accused of a land grab is suing after the government took back the land title***

The agribusiness company, **Agro EcoEnergy** was given a 99 year lease to 20 thousand hectares of land near **Bagamoyo** on the east coast of **Tanzania**, which it planned to turn into a sugar plantation. The land was in use by small-scale farmers and cattle herders. The first phase of the project would have meant 300 people lost their homes, while another 1000 lost land. The company offered compensation but it did not consult with the local people and get their agreement and consent to the sugar plantation in the first place. Small-scale farmers produce the food that feeds the majority of the world. They need the kind of investment that supports them, recognises their rights and promotes sustainability.

**Tanzania** has recently faced a wave of ISDS cases in addition to this one. It lost a case to **Standard Chartered Bank** over an electricity contract and was ordered to pay a massive £116m. It is being sued by **Acacia Mining** over gold mining, by **Symbion Power** also on electricity, by **Biwater Gauff** on water supply and by **Sunlodges** over another land licence.

[www.globaljustice.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/resources/isds\\_files\\_ecoenergy\\_web.pdf](http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/resources/isds_files_ecoenergy_web.pdf)