



Uganda: Keep Promises to Fishing Communities Harmed by Oil Project

Allow Thousands Evicted Near Kingfisher Facilities to Return Home, Pay Compensation

(Kampala, March 31, 2026) — President Yoweri Museveni should take immediate action to establish community fisheries protection units and reverse evictions near the massive Kingfisher oil and gas project along Lake Albert, the Environmental Governance Institute Uganda (EGI) and Climate Rights International (CRI) said today. On March 31 the organizations sent a [letter](#) to President Museveni calling on him to take action to protect communities near Kingfisher, which is owned and operated by TotalEnergies, the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), and the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC).

During his campaign for reelection, in August 2025 President Museveni [met](#) with various fishing communities across the country and said that “indigenous fishermen shall manage the lakes, and the Fisheries Protection Unit must work with communities and not abuse their rights.” On December 26, 2025, he issued [a directive](#) to dissolve all marine fisheries units and to establish new structures composed of representatives from indigenous communities in order to promote the sustainable governance of landing sites. Following the directive, EGI and CRI issued [a public statement](#) calling for its timely implementation well before the election period.

“Despite the President’s campaign promises, thus far there has been no visible progress to protect the rights of fishing communities near oil and gas facilities,” said Samuel Okulony, Chief Executive Officer at the Environmental Governance Institute Uganda. “The absence of concrete action risks eroding the confidence of fishing communities in these commitments, especially when the issues at stake directly affect their livelihoods, safety, and access to Lake Albert’s resources.”

Fishing communities in the Lake Albert region near Kingfisher, which is part of the larger East Africa Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project, have faced serious human rights abuses, including illegal burning of fishing boats, extortion within local fishing value chains, and intimidation by soldiers. These findings were documented in our 2025 co-authored report titled “[Extortion, Coercion, and Impoverishment in Kingfisher Oil Development](#),” and the CRI report, “[They Don’t Want People to Stay Here: How CNOOC’s Kingfisher Oil Project in Uganda Is Causing Human Rights, Environmental, and Climate Harms](#),” which provides a stark account of the ongoing challenges facing fishing communities in the region.

During the campaign, President Museveni also issued a [directive](#) halting the eviction of over 4,000 people from Kapai Sub county in Hoima District, an area close to the oil developments, and ordered that those already displaced be allowed to return to their homes. However, following the elections and the confirmation of results, on February 26 these families were forcibly evicted again, by soldiers [commanded by Brigadier Peter](#) Nabasa of the Ugandan army. Security forces are reportedly occupying this land [and staying inside the houses of those evicted](#). The situation has since deteriorated further, leaving thousands of cultivators and pastoralists uncertain about their future and stripped of the land on which their livelihoods depend. The affected families were displaced from several villages, including Waaki North, Kapapi Central, Waaki South, Runga, Kiryatete, and Kiganja in Kapapi and Kiganja sub-counties.

EGI and CRI called on the Ugandan government to expedite the establishment of new marine units that reflect the diverse voices and leadership of indigenous fishing communities; establish clear and binding safeguards that respect and protect the human rights of communities, including land rights, cultural heritage, and environmental integrity, from any form of undue investor influence or interference; and issue a public directive to halt any further eviction of communities in Kapapi and establish a special Presidential Taskforce including representatives of the affected communities and religious leaders to oversee and ensure all the affected communities are returned to their land and are compensated for the damages experienced.

“President Museveni should order the army to allow the thousands of people it evicted to return home immediately and pay compensation for their losses,” said Brad Adams, Executive Director at Climate Rights International. “Military officials responsible for this illegal activity should be removed from their posts and held accountable under Ugandan law.”

For more information

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