



AN AFRICAN DELEGATION STAGES A DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF BELGIAN COMPANY SIAT TO RECLAIM THEIR LAND AND DEMAND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Press release - 22 June 2022

On Wednesday 22 June, a delegation of communities from Ivory Coast, Ghana and Nigeria, accompanied by local and Belgian NGOs, made its way to the headquarters of SIAT-Group in Brussels. The delegation handed a letter to the Belgian company's officials to denounce the grabbing of their land and the violation of their rights. They demanded that any dialogue take place in the affected regions and in an inclusive, fair and transparent manner. The active participation of local communities is essential for the development of a fair redress process.

Five community and civil society representatives from Ghana, Nigeria and Ivory Coast are in Brussels to denounce land grabbing by a Belgian rubber and palm oil company, SIAT (Société d'investissement pour l'agriculture tropicale), and its negative impact on local people.

They organised a mobilisation in front of the company's offices in Zaventem. Signs, banners, slogans, the messages were unanimous: "Give us back our land", "No to deforestation for industrial plantations", "Human rights before profit". A symbolic moment was organised, with red handprints left on a pile of tyres. The message is clear "We don't want to die for your rubber". Finally, the affected communities read aloud - in French and English - the letter they handed to the CEO of SIAT. The letter reads: "*We consider that any discussion between the SIAT GROUP, the people affected by its activities and the representatives of their interests, must take place directly on the ground. If such communication takes place, it must be transparent, fair, inclusive and conducted in good faith.*"

SIAT is one of the five major companies that control 75% of oil palm plantations in Africa. It sells its palm oil products to large multinationals such as Unilever and Nestlé, and its rubber products feed the supply chains of international tyre giants such as Michelin and Goodyear.

- [Press release announcing the delegation's visit](#)
- [Photos of the event](#)

COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION

- **Gladys Omorefe Osaghae** (Nigeria): farmer, community leader and secretary of a women's group from the Obaretin community. Member of the Integrated Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (IRFAN).
- **Sinan Ouattara Issifou** (Ivory Coast): representative of the local communities of Famienkro, spokesperson for the King of the Andoh and president of the Alliance for Sustainable Development and the Environment (ADDE).
- **Daleba Nahounou Pierre Lautti** (Ivory Coast): head of "Social Justice" and programmes within the association Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement (JVE) - Côte d'Ivoire
- **Rita Uwaka** (Nigeria): Forest & Biodiversity programme coordinator at Friends of the Earth Africa
- **Wisdom Koffi Adjawlo** (Ghana): executive director of the association Youth Volunteers for the Environment - Ghana

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **New policy brief:** "[Large-scale land acquisitions in Africa: Impacts, conflicts and human rights violations. The case of SIAT's subsidiary in Ivory Coast](#)"
- **Video:** [Testimonies from communities affected by SIAT activities in Ghana](#)
- **Video:** "[MADE IN IMPUNITY: Belgian rubber from Ivory Coast](#)"
- **Fact sheets:** [Ghana](#) and [Ivory Coast](#) cases presented by the People's Tribunal on cases of abuse by agribusiness companies in Africa
- **Article by GRAIN:** "[Communities in Africa fight back against land grabbing for palm oil](#)".

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