

Urgent protest and request submitted to JICA's President Mr Shinichi Kitaoka

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Construction of infrastructure to support large-scale agriculture is under way throughout the Nacala Corridor of northern Mozambique

Africa Japan Forum, Japan International Volunteer Center, ATTAC Japan, No to landgrab, Japan and The Concerned Citizens with Development of Mozambique-Japan

7 December 2016

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Urgent protest and request submitted to JICA's President Mr Shinichi Kitaoka

Concerning JICA's attempt to suppress Mozambican peasant leaders and CSO representative visiting Japan
(*English version with additional information*)

24 January 2017

1. Background

- i. The first protest statement of UNAC (Mozambique National Peasant Union) on ProSAVANA (Triangular Cooperation for Agriculture Development in African Tropical Savannah- Japan, Brazil and Mozambique) was released in October 2012.

- ii. Being moved by this statement written by the local peasants of Northern Mozambique (especially from the Nacala Corridor region), we, the citizens and NGOs of Japan, have been actively engaging with advocacy activities towards this Japanese ODA programme, ProSAVANA. Together with these peasant unions and CSOs (civil society organisations) of Mozambique and Brazil, we have been conducting field research, literature analysis and interviews in order to carry out “fact-based” advocacy.
- iii. Since the latter half of 2013, there have been many cases of human rights violations in the process of the three governments promoting the ProSAVANA programme. Cases of stalking, intimidating, blackmailing, and oppressing the peasant leaders and citizens who pose questions and/or contest the programme have been repeatedly reported.
- iv. Through the disclosure and leaks of official documentsⁱ, we finally learned the concealed facts related to ProSAVANA. These documents reveal how JICA’s money has been used to intervene in, divide and isolate the peasant movements and CSOs in Mozambique.
- v. JICA pursued these actions by hiring Mozambican consultancy agencies to: (1) formulate, define and carry out “ProSAVANA’s communication strategy”; and (2) establish “a sole dialogue platform” of civil society with the governments on ProSAVANA. These activities and contracts were concealed from the civil societies of the three countries until 2016.
- vi. As these facts were revealed by collective efforts and pressure, the CSOs of Mozambique, Brazil and Japan have been repeatedly protesting and submitting complaints and requests to JICA and the governmentsⁱⁱ.
- vii. We would also like to call attention to the current Mozambican situation. Violent confrontations re-emerged in 2013 and have since been spreading to the provinces and districts where the ProSAVANA programme is carried out-- Nampula and Zambezia provinces. Over 10,000 refugees have taken refuge in Malawi from Tete province, located at the end of the Nacala Corridor.ⁱⁱⁱ
- viii. Moreover, since 2015, there have been cases of assassination, kidnapping, physical injury, prosecution, and blackmailing of academics (university professors), journalists, editors of independent newspapers, pro-citizens public lawyers and TV personalities

who expressed concerns and critical statements towards the (then) president, government and its policies. These cases indicate a serious deterioration of peace, democracy, governance and human rights in Mozambique^{iv}.

- ix. Based on these facts, we, the Japanese civil society, have been raising awareness about the worrisome situation in Mozambique and the dangers that exist for Mozambicans who speak openly and critically about ProSAVANA. We have also been vigorously making requests to the Japanese government and JICA to do everything they can to protect the lives and security of these people.
- x. Last month, November 2016, a group of Japanese academics led by a professor emeritus of development economy invited peasant leaders from Northern Mozambique and a CSO representative to share their perspectives on the Nacala Corridor Development and ProSAVANA at an academic conference of the Japan Society for International Development at Hiroshima University (26 November) and at a public gathering in Tokyo (28 November).
- xi. Among these representatives, there was a peasant leader who was stalked and intimidated by local governmental authorities, who then insulted and questioned the leader for 6 hours.

2. The case: JICA's attempt of silencing and intimidating peasant leaders

- i. Despite all the above, as the two above events approached, it became clear that JICA had invited to Japan the ex Vice-Minister of Agriculture (MASA), who is currently a ProSAVANA Coordinator, and the Permanent Secretary of MASA,^v in order for them to attend the public gathering and counter-argue these peasants and civil society leaders.
- ii. Mr Hiroshi Kato, JICA's board member since October 2013 (No.3 of JICA) in charge of African issues, admitted that it was his decision to invite them over while these peasant leaders were visiting Japan and for this trip to be covered by the Japanese government (JICA), since his staff, who are responsible for ProSAVANA (Africa Division and Rural Development Division), had sought his help upon the news of the up-coming public event^{vi}.

- iii. JICA sent a governmental invitation to the public gathering in Tokyo to these high-ranking figures of MASA and the Mozambican ambassador without any consultation with the six Japanese NGOs who had organised the event [vii](#).
- iv. JICA repeatedly pressed the organisers to accept the attendance of these Mozambican governmental officials. As the visit of the governmental delegation of MASA approached and without being able to confirm the approval [viii](#), JICA's new director of Rural Division in charge of ProSAVANA (from September 2016) suddenly showed up at the academic conference venue in Hiroshima to request a meeting between the contact person of the event and Mr Kato, who was said to be waiting to meet him. [ix](#)
- v. The Director did not stay and listen to the presentations of the Mozambican peasants and CSO representative, but left the venue before the presentations began, and only came back after the presentations ended. Again, the director insisted on holding a meeting with the contact person alone. Later it was revealed that his trip and participation fee to the academic conference were covered by JICA under the project name of "meeting with Japanese civil society" on ProSAVANA. [x](#)
- vi. Still in Hiroshima, representatives of the Japanese academics and NGOs strongly condemned JICA's series of actions and harmful attempts directly to Mr Kato and this director. Mr. Kato and the director admitted to the representatives that "it was poor judgement".
- vii. In fact, right before this, on 10 November, CSOs of the three countries issued a statement against JICA's actions in promoting divisions within the Mozambican society by providing funds through a "consultancy service contract" with a Nampula-based NGO, SOLIDARIEDADE. [xi](#) Although President Kitaoka and others at JICA did receive this statement [xii](#), JICA continued to commit wrongful acts and misuse public funds.
- viii. During the public events, the Japanese NGOs shared the above account of what transpired, while eight JICA and three MOFA representatives were present. Many of the participants shared their astonishment and disturbance with JICA's past attempts during and after the event.
- ix. The peasant leaders shared about cases of landgrabbing and the difficulties caused by Vale's (thus Mitsui's) railway construction and the cases of human rights violations and

divisions among the Mozambican civil society caused by ProSAVANA, especially by JICA's funds.

- x. The peasant leaders pointed out that they now have all the written evidences of wrongdoing and attempted wrongdoing that JICA has encouraged and committed, and they said that JICA's money has caused human rights abuses and divisions among Mozambican civil society. They urged JICA to stop all of its manoeuvres and to reflect on their wrongdoings.
- xi. If the Mozambican government officials had attended the gathering, the peasant leaders and civil society representative would not have been able to share what has been truly happening on the ground and express their views freely. They would have been intimidated and would have felt oppressed. JICA was about to create such a situation and another case of human rights abuse, and again with our public funds, contrary to our expectations as tax-payers and the people of Japan.

3. Urgent protest

- i. Although ProSAVANA has been promoted as a "Triangular Cooperation" or "South-South Cooperation", there is no evidence that the Brazilian government has been involved with the series of manoeuvres and interventions deployed on Mozambican civil society.
- ii. JICA's counter-actions towards Mozambican civil society occurred over the last four years, beginning with the formulation and implementation of the "ProSAVANA: Communication Strategy"^{xiii} in August 2013, by contracting a local consulting agency, CV&A.
- iii. After the disastrous failure of a "Public Hearing" financially supported only by the Japanese government (*the equivalent of 76,700 US dollars were spent), JICA hired MAJOL to establish the "sole dialogue mechanism" with those who "favour ProSAVANA" among the Mozambican civil society in the north.
- iv. (*Total amount of 50,000 US dollars were spent by JICA for two 3-month contracts with CV&A. And another 45,870 US dollars with MAJOL for 4.5-months-contract.)

- v. The consultant team was composed of ex-directors of WWF Mozambique and Action Aid Mozambique who were sponsors of many Mozambican NGOs and associations.^{xiv} These facts were revealed by leaked documents and the patient requests for the disclosure of JICA's documents through the Information Act^{xv}.
- vi. There is no trace of involvement of the Brazilian government in any of these initiatives. The Japanese government confirmed that it had no acknowledgement of the Brazilian government disbursing any funds for formulation and implementation of the "communication strategy" for ProSAVANA^{xvi}. This indicates that without JICA's active involvement and the Japanese public funds it allocated through its sub-contractors (Japanese and Mozambican consulting firms and a Mozambican NGO), it would have been impossible to achieve the "divide and rule" of local civil society.
- vii. As a result of the massive injection of energy and funds from JICA, those local peasants and civil society organisations who continue to oppose ProSAVANA have been excluded, marginalised, isolated and left vulnerable to oppression by others and the local government^{xvii}.
- viii. These points based on written evidence, together with the accumulation of human rights abuses occurring under ProSAVANA, have been repeatedly reported to JICA and the Japanese government by Mozambican, Brazilian and Japanese CSOs through press-release, statements and meetings. However, JICA has not respected these voices, rather, they carried out more manoeuvres to silence opposition and intimidate protesters. (*At least, this time, JICA's No.3 and director did admit "poor judgment", but only informally and no apologies have been given to the Japanese NGOs or Mozambican civil society representatives.)
- ix. As more and more information about the actions of JICA have been revealed, it is clear that the major responsibility for the flourishing human rights abuses and wrongdoings targeting the Mozambican society lies with the Japanese government, especially to JICA and its financial power.
- x. (*It has been revealed that up to March 2016, 22,000,000 US dollars (or 2,200,000,000 yen) have been spent under ProSAVANA. The amount used for persuading the Mozambican civil society is about 2,645,000 US dollars (or 300,000,000 yen) according to the latest information^{xviii}.)

- xii. As citizens and taxpayers of Japan, we strongly condemn these actions by JICA, our sole official international cooperation agency.

4. Additions

- i. All eight executive officers responsible for ProSAVANA within JICA and MOFA were transferred after the series of interventions in local civil society with the use of JICA funds was revealed in 2016. In other words, all of the official executives who had planned and implemented the series of actions, were transferred before they fulfilled their responsibilities.
- ii. Thus, ProSAVANA continues without any official admittance or reflection on the past irregularities and wrongdoings while local opponents of the project remain in danger of receiving further pressure and oppression and are isolated from their old guardians.
- iii. What JICA was involved with, promoted, committed to and financed under ProSAVANA clearly violates the basic principle of “international cooperation” written in the Charter of the United Nations, Japan’s Cabinet decision on the “Development Cooperation Charter”, JICA’s “Guidelines on Social and Environmental Considerations”, and even the “Universal Declaration of the Human Rights” and “International Covenants on Human Rights”.

5. Urgent Demands

In light of the above evidence-based information and accounts, we strongly demand JICA and the Japanese government:

- i. immediately stop ProSAVANA, which betrayed the expectation of the people of the three countries as an international cooperation based on solidarity between the peoples.
- ii. provide a proposal with specific plans and actions in order to protect peasant and civil society representatives and others who continue opposing ProSAVANA from violations of human rights and dangers to their lives and property.
- iii. freeze disbursement of any funds to “the dialogue mechanism”, which is totally against all the above mentioned domestic and international laws and the guidelines

and principles established by JICA and MOFA, in order to prevent further aggravation of divisions within the recipient civil society.

- iv. disclose all remaining government documents related to ProSAVANA

Signed by

Africa Japan Forum,

Japan International Volunteer Center,

ATTAC Japan,

No to landgrab, Japan and

The Concerned Citizens with Development of Mozambique-Japan.

i- The leaked documents posted at:

<http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/26158-prosavana-files> and the disclosed documents at

http://www.ajf.gr.jp/lang_ja/ProSAVANA/index_docs.html

ii- <http://farmlandgrab.org/26457>

others at <http://www.farmlandgrab.org/cat/show/827>

iii- The report based on UNHCR, VOA and DW are posted at:

http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/about/shimin/page22_000146.html

iv- The report based on Mozambican and International media are posted at:

http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/about/shimin/page23_001101.html

- HE Ildio Jose Miguel (Parmanent Secretary of MASA), HE António Raúl Limbal (Ex Vice Minister of MASA, HE Jose Maria Morais (Ambassador).

vi- Mr Kato confirmed this point during a conversation with a NGO representative.

vii- The Mozambican embassy in Tokyo called the contact organisation for the event on 24 November 2016, telling that the attendance of the ambassador and the first secretary was already “arranged” with JICA.

viii- The organisers of the public event requested re-consideration of this invitation to JICA.

ix- Later the director denied that it was him who was waiting for the contact person.

x- The director's explanation during the ProSAVANA periodical dialogue at MOFA on 7 December 2016.

xi- http://www.ajf.gr.jp/lang_ja/ProSAVANA/docs/130.pdf

xii- <http://farmlandgrab.org/26688>

xiii- http://www.ajf.gr.jp/lang_ja/ProSAVANA/docs/103.pdf

http://www.ajf.gr.jp/lang_ja/ProSAVANA/docs/104.pdf

xiv- <http://farmlandgrab.org/25963>

xv- <http://farmlandgrab.org/26449>

xvi- Official answer of the cabinet office on 22 December 2016.

<http://www.sangiin.go.jp/japanese/joho1/kousei/syuisyo/192/syuisyo.htm>

xvii- See the leaked reports by MAJOL at

<http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/26158-prosavana-files> Also, their manifestation at:

<http://farmlandgrab.org/25797>

xviii- <http://www.sangiin.go.jp/japanese/joho1/kousei/syuisyo/192/syuisyo.htm>

<http://www.ngo-jvc.net/jp/projects/advocacy/data/20161017-prosavana-1.pdf>