



## Press Statement

We the people, comprising of Kenyans from all walks of life, bringing together different actors and institutions, including women groups, civil society organizations, youth associations, professional groups, non state actors and institutions of persons with disabilities, all coming together under the banner of **deCOALonize KENYA**, hereby commit and affirm ourselves to the full realization of the right guaranteed under Article 42 of the Constitution of Kenya which provides that: *“Every person has the right to a clean and healthy environment”*. In doing so, we oppose the move by government of Kenya to violate the constitution and set up a coal plant in Lamu and the proposed mining in Kitui County.

Besides the Constitution, in 2016, Kenya became a signatory of the Paris Agreement which is within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The aims of the Paris Agreement include inter alia *“to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development”*. By setting up the Lamu coal plant and mining of coal deposits in Kitui, Kenya is going against the Paris Agreement and its international obligations by directly contributing to harmful greenhouse emissions.

Lamu is today famous for its status as a world heritage site. In 2001, the World Heritage Committee inscribed Lamu Old Town on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Having a coal plant within and/or around this site will not only interfere with the site but also cause untold damage to the Lamu Archipelago which hosts several archeological/historical sites of great significance. The coal plant is not sustainable and will be destructive to the highly dependable natural resources including corals and plants within the Archipelago.

Further the environmental degradation will affect the marine life and judging from the experience of South Africa, amongst others, it will lead to premature births in Lamu estimated at approximately 1,600 per year. The effects of the gases that will be emitted by the plant will also be felt away from the plant site when they descend from the over 200 meters high chimneys. This means it is not only Lamu and its environs which will be affected but the entire Coastal belt and inwards to Garissa and Mtito Andei.

What makes matters worse is that actually Kenya currently has surplus power compared to consumption. The country hosts the seventh biggest geo thermal resource in the world which is producing enough clean energy. Further, there is endless sunshine and a lot of wind that can be used at less investment to produce more sustainable clean energy. It is appalling to note while the global trend currently is to move away from coal energy, Kenya is instead embracing it to the detriment of the environment and the health of its people.

We also wish to declare that we stand in solidarity with our colleague in Lamu who have recently been arrested for holding peaceful demonstrations in Lamu and have been denied the right to peaceful assembly enshrined in the constitution. Two Save Lamu members, Walid Ahmed and Ishaq Abubakar, would be with us today but are actually in court in Lamu to have their matter heard. We call demand that their case be dropped and all charges withdrawn so that their constitutional right is upheld.

In keeping with our commitment and affirmation for a clean environment, we categorically oppose all plans by state and other actors to set up a coal plant in Lamu including the mining in Mui basin and submit the following demands:

1. The immediate cessation of all activities leading to the construction of a coal plant in Lamu;
2. The immediate cessation of all activities leading to coal mining in Kitui;
3. A review of NEMA licensing process so as to include effective public participation that can curb impunity and corruption in environmental management in Kenya;

4. A vetting of all public officials including the CS who were involved in approving coal mining and the construction of a coal plant in Lamu
5. A review of the energy policy in Kenya with a view to permanently ban coal in Kenya.

There is no such thing as clean coal. All coal energy is dirty and we as a movement are calling on Kenyans to join the deCOALonize movement and oppose all coal related projects in Kenya.

**deCOALonize MOVEMENT**

**WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY**

**5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2018**