

Joint Civil Society Statement

Urgent Call on the IFC and the EBRD for Remedy and Accountability at Indorama Agro, Uzbekistan

We, the undersigned civil society organizations, call on the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to take urgent and concrete action to remedy the severe harms inflicted on workers and communities by Indorama Agro, a cotton producing company in Uzbekistan that received \$130 million financing from both institutions.

Third party labour assessments and independent monitoring findings confirm systemic labor rights violations by Indorama Agro, including unpaid wages, contract violations, union-busting tactics, retaliations against workers and rights monitors, and the lack of an effective grievance redress mechanism.

Indorama Agro has systematically eroded workers' rights by exploiting their vulnerability created by insecure working conditions whereby employees have been misclassified as "service providers", depriving some 400 workers of trade union membership and safeguards and benefits under employment law. Public monitors have documented multiple cases of workers being coerced to work without pay under the threat of non-renewal of their contracts—an indicator of forced labor.

Furthermore, government officials and Indorama Agro representatives have intimidated and harassed workers to silence those who speak out. Civil society organisations have documented over 80 incidents in which workers were subjected to threatening calls and visits from local authorities, police, security services, and company representatives in retaliation for reporting rights violations and engaging with civil society organisations.

Alongside labor violations, the project also resulted in the economic displacement of some 10,000 farmers and farm workers through land seizures obtained without free, prior and informed consent. Indorama Agro failed to implement required livelihood restoration measures, leaving thousands without access to land and income.

In January 2025, the IFC informed civil society organisations that Indorama Agro had exited the project early by prepaying its loans to both lenders while serious labor rights abuses remain unaddressed.

The EBRD and the IFC project documents acknowledged the risks associated with the project prior to loan approval, yet failed to mitigate them effectively. Despite repeated reports of rights violations at Indoram Agro to the EBRD and the IFC by civil society organizations over a period of four years, lenders continued to disburse loan payments without ensuring their client complied with environmental and social safeguards.

Without a functioning grievance mechanism, independent trade union representation, or public monitoring, thousands of affected workers and farmers are now isolated, voiceless, and unprotected without justice or restitution.

We, therefore, call on the IFC and the EBRD to take the following urgent actions:

- Establish a remediation program to restore the livelihoods of displaced farmers.
- Ensure the payment of unpaid wages and bonuses to workers by leveraging Indorama’s global partnerships and/or creating a worker compensation fund if Indorama refuses to comply.
- Engage with the Uzbek government to ensure full compliance with labor assessment corrective actions.
- Ensure accountability for retaliatory actions against workers and public monitors.
- Support capacity-building initiatives for workers affected by the project, equipping them with the necessary skills to actively participate in decision-making on labor rights and working conditions.
- Conduct and disclose an independent evaluation of the project’s environmental and social impacts.

The EBRD and the IFC must take responsibility for the harm by leveraging their influence with Indorama globally and with the Uzbek government to ensure that remedy is achieved, further loss of livelihood is prevented and an environment is created where farmers and workers can improve their working conditions without fear of reprisal.

Failure to do so will not only deny thousands of people justice but will also expose both institutions as enablers of labor exploitation and embolden abusive actors to exit projects early with impunity. This will convey the message that development finance institutions prioritize corporate interests over human rights—a message that must not stand.

According to one worker, “This news [the IFC and the EBRD exit] has affected me very badly. It is very painful. We were hoping for something to change. Unfortunately, they fired us. The company is paying its loans with the money they stole from us.”

We stand in solidarity with the affected people seeking justice and will continue to hold the IFC and the EBRD accountable for those harmed by their investments.

Signatures

1. AbibiNsroma Foundation | Ghana
2. Accountability Counsel | Global
3. Actions pour la conservation de la nature et le développement communautaire (ACNDC) | DRC
4. African Law Foundation (AFRILAW) | Nigeria
5. Alliance for Rural Democracy (ARD) | Liberia
6. Alternatives ménages, nature et marchés (AMEN) | DRC
7. Anti-Slavery International | UK
8. Association Central Asia | Uzbekistan
9. Association for Land Reform & Development (ALRD) | Bangladesh

10. Bangladesh Food Security Network (KHANI Bangladesh) | Bangladesh
11. Bank Information Center | USA
12. Bir Duino – Kyrgyzstan | Kyrgyzstan
13. Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation | Uganda
14. Cambodian Youth Network Association (C.Y.N) | Cambodia
15. CEE Bankwatch Network | Czech Republic
16. Central Asia Due Diligence | UK
17. Centre de défense des Droits de l’Homme et Démocratie (CDHD) | DRC
18. Centre for community mobilization and support NGO | Armenia
19. Centre for Environment, Human Rights & Development Forum (CEHRDF) | Bangladesh
20. Centre for Research and Advocacy, Manipur | India
21. Centre for the political economy of labour – Strathclyde University | Scotland
22. Child Labor Coalition | US
23. Coalition des ONG Oeuvrants dans le secteurs de mines, Environnement et Électricité | DRC
24. Community Land Action Now! (CLAN) | Kenya
25. Community Resource Centre | Thailand
26. COMPPART Foundation for Justice and Peacebuilding | Nigeria
27. Conseil Regional des Organisations Non Gouvernementales de développement | DRC
28. Defenders in Development campaign | Global
29. Disability Peoples Forum Uganda | Uganda
30. Ecolur Informational NGO | Armenia
31. European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ) | Europe
32. Foundation for community driven development | Tanzania
33. Freedom for Eurasia | Austria
34. Freedom United | US
35. Friends of Franbarnie International (FOFI) | Liberia
36. Friends with Environment in Development | Uganda
37. GAIA Asia Pacific | Asia Pacific
38. Gender Action | USA
39. Global Labor Justice (GLJ) | Global
40. Global Legal Action Network (GLAN) | UK / Ireland
41. Green Advocates International | Liberia

42. Green Alternative | Georgia
43. Green Leaf Advocacy and Empowerment Center | Nigeria
44. Human Rights Organization of Uzbekistan Ezgulik | Uzbekistan
45. Indigenous Women Legal Awareness Group (INWOLAG) | Nepal
46. Inisiasi Masyarakat Adat (IMA) | Indonesia
47. Initiative for Right View | Bangladesh
48. Innovation pour le Développement et la Protection de l'Environnement | DRC
49. Institute of pastoralism Development and Research | Kenya
50. Instituto Maíra | Brazil
51. International Accountability Project | India
52. International Union of Food, Agricultural and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) | Global / Switzerland
53. Jamaa Resource Initiatives | Kenya
54. JUHUDI Community Support Center | Kenya
55. JusticeMakers Bangladesh in France (JMBF) | France
56. Kazakhstan International bureau for human rights and rule of law | Kazakhstan
57. Koalisi Rakyat untuk Hak atas Air (KRuHA) / people's coalition for the right to water | Indonesia
58. Land Home Justice Network | UK
59. Lawyers' Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNIP) | Nepal
60. Lumière Synergie pour le Développement (LSD) | Senegal
61. Mae Nam Khone Institute | Myanmar
62. MenaFem Movement for Economic Development and Ecological Justice | Middle East and North Africa
63. National Consumers League | US
64. National Indigenous Women Forum | Nepal
65. Neighbourhood Environment Watch Foundation | Nigeria
66. NGO Forum on ADB | Asia
67. NGO Taraqqiet | Tajikistan
68. ONG Acadehlib | Cameroon
69. OT Watch | Mongolia
70. Phenix Center for Sustainable Development | Jordan
71. Ponlok Khmer | Cambodia
72. Psychological Responsiveness NGO | Mongolia
73. Recourse | The Netherlands

74. Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean | Latin America
75. Rivers Without Borders Mongolia | Mongolia
76. Samata | India
77. Sengwer Indigenous Community Trust | Kenya
78. Sindh Agriultur Research Council (SARC) | Pakistan
79. STAR Kampuchea (SK) | Cambodia
80. Steps Without Borders NGO | Mongolia
81. Sukaar Welfare Organization | Pakistan
82. Task Force Mapalad National Peasant Federation | Philippines
83. The Awakening | Pakistan
84. The Oakland Institute | US
85. University of Ulster | UK
86. Urgewald e.V. | Germany
87. Uzbek Forum for Human Rights | Germany / Uzbekistan
88. WALHI / Friends of the Earth Indonesia | Indonesia
89. Youth for Green Communities | Uganda