

**REPORT ON THE SITUATION, CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY
RESIDENTS OF NGORONGORO TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC
OF TANZANIA**

TO:

H: E EXCELLENCY SAMIA SULUHU HASSAN

1 DECEMBER 2024

ARUSHA -TANZANIA

1.0 Introduction

Your Excellency, Madam President,

First and foremost, we wish to express our gratitude to God Almighty, full of mercy, for granting us life and good health, and for continuing to protect and sustain you as you lead our beloved nation.

On behalf of the residents of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to you for dedicating your time to listen to us. We are fully aware of your immense responsibilities as the Head of State. We warmly welcome you to visit our Ngorongoro Division.

On August 18, 2024, the residents of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area conducted a peaceful protest lasting six consecutive days. The demonstration took place on the Ngorongoro-Serengeti main road and the road leading to Nainokanoka Ward at the Lemala gate. This protest was prompted four years of closure of all avenues leaving us with no option but to use our primary constituency powers to demand response.

Our Peaceful demonstration was meant to draw the government's attention to our grievances and request in particular for:

1. Restoration of essential social services that has been affected by four years policy for social service blockade.

2. Reinstatement of our voting rights that were extinguished by National Electoral Commission in July 2024
3. An investigation into the Independent National Electoral Commission's transfer of all local residents, including deceased individuals, to Msomera Village, and the removal of polling stations from Ngorongoro Division.
4. An end to the harassment by the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority (NCA).
5. Cessation of arbitrary arrests and turning our homes as police state.
6. The re-establishment of the Pastoralists' Council.
7. Reinstatement of delisted 11 wards, 25 villages, and 96 hamlets within the Ngorongoro Division and revocation of GN 673 of 2024 that purporting to extinguish local government machineries in Ngorongoro.
8. Immediate action against persons responsible for poisoning livestock through government provided saltlick for livestock.
9. Lifting restrictions on grazing lands in some areas in Ngorongoro
10. End hotel investment in grazing areas.
11. End segregation policy that forbids individual residents of Ngorongoro from individual development including housing, gate entry fee.

Your Excellency, after the peaceful demonstrations by Ngorongoro residents, you responded to our demands on August 23, 2024, through the honorable ministers:

- Hon. William Lukuvi, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office for Policy, Parliament, and Coordination.
- Hon. Prof. Palamagamba John Kabudi, Minister for Constitution and Legal Affairs.
- Hon. Paul Makonda, Regional Commissioner of Arusha.

The three government officials conveyed to us that the government has agreed to:

1. Suspend the government notice that delisted village, Ward and Hamlet and therefore all local government machineries will remain functional.
2. That, Government through National electoral Commission will annul its decision to exclude Ngorongoro from eligible areas for voters Registration and voting

3. Extend Loduare entry time for Ngorongoro resident to 6:30 PM and effectively suspend daily entry gate payment of Tsh 40000 for cars owned by resident of Ngorongoro.
4. Renovate social services, including primary schools, secondary schools, and health centers.

Your actions not only these promises brought immense relief to the community but also instilled hope and trust in the government. For this, we express our heartfelt gratitude.

Your Excellency, Hon. William Lukuvi further informed the public that, beyond the directives, you had granted an opportunity for representatives from each ward to meet with you. We firmly believe this is the foundation of today's meeting.

Your Excellency,

In continuation of what is stated above, on September 5, 2024, you sent your advisors, Hon. Ambassador Rajab Omar Luhwavi, responsible for Political and Social Relations, and Hon. Abdallah Majurah Bulembo, responsible for Political Affairs. They visited several villages, gathering information on community challenges and inspected several stalled projects, including the construction of the Ngorongoro Girls Secondary School and Ngoile Dispensary in Ngoile Ward, which has remained unfinished since 2021.

However, despite the hope instilled by your directives, many of your instructions remain unimplemented, as outlined below:

2.0 COMMUNITY CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

a) Multiple Land Use Model mismanagement

Your Excellency,

The Multiple Land Use Model has been sustainable for centuries and officially in law for the last six decades due to the traditional lifestyles of the Ngorongoro Division residents, primarily pastoralists. However, the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority (NCAA) has propagated misinformation that the integrated land-use system in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA)

is "dead." In reality, the area's ecology remains robust and intact, as evidenced by numerous international accolades awarded to the Conservation Area over the years.

Since its establishment nearly 60 years ago, the NCA has achieved significant global recognition, including:

- **UNESCO World Heritage Site** status in 1979,
- Designation as a **Man and Biosphere Reserve** in 1981,
- Recognition as one of the **Seven Natural Wonders of Africa** in 2013,
- Acknowledgment as a **Mixed World Heritage Site** in 2015,
- Designation as a **Global Geopark** in 2018.

These achievements have also translated into increased revenue, such as TZS 143 billion collected in 2018/2019, and over TZS 180 billion in 2023/2024. Tourist numbers have similarly grown, from 725,535 in 2019 to nearly 1,000,000 in 2023/2024. This simply means, pastoralist is not threatening tourism as party of the relocation campaign has formed its opinion as its base.

We the residents of Ngorongoro understand and value the sustainable use of natural resources in the area. The traditional grazing zones used seasonally for livestock and water sources illustrate the compatibility of the integrated land-use system with conservation. Contrary to claims made by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, the Multiple Land Use system in Ngorongoro Conservation Area is not a failure but a success.

Additionally, no scientific studies contradict the settled independent researchers findings who demonstrated that the Ngorongoro residents significantly contribute to the conservation area's success.

Recommendations:

Land is a critical resource for the economic, political, and cultural well-being of individuals, families, and communities. For the Ngorongoro communities, land is particularly vital for both

economic and cultural purposes. Therefore, in managing and strategizing land use, active community involvement is essential.

It is evident that the Conservation Area is sufficient to support tourism, conservation, and community development activities without compromising its ecological integrity. To ensure effective management and sustainable development, the community should actively participate in the following areas:

1. Grassroots Participation:

- Engage village governments and traditional institutions in planning and managing land use including hotel development to avoid land conflict
- Government should ensure equal interest in ecological integrity preservation, tourism investments, and community development guided by section 6 of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Act.

2. Strategic Involvement:

- Actively involve the community in land use through strategic plans and policies, such as the General Management Plan (GMP) and Corporate General Plan of the Conservation Authority.

By integrating community participation in these areas, a balance can be maintained between conservation, tourism development, and the well-being of local communities.

B) The Relocation to Msomera -Tanga

Your Excellency,

The relocation process of the indigenous people of the Ngorongoro District to Msomera has never been inclusive and has been shrouded in significant deceit. It has never been supported by communities in Ngorongoro. This process has been driven by propaganda and misinformation, largely propagated through media outlets and by individuals who are ill-intentioned toward Maasai

community, and who lack understanding of the management system of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA).

Your Excellency,

The perception that we have been included in this relocation is never true. The government through Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa and then Arusha Regional Commissioner held meetings with Waarusha community in Arusha including a meeting held on 11th March 2022 purporting to be engagement with Ngorongoro Maasai. This is never true.

Your Excellency,

During the implementation of this relocation process, the people of Ngorongoro District have faced various obstacles, including development restrictions. Many of our people has been brutally beaten and harmed by the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) rangers as part of putting pressure for people to relocate. It is clear that this process is not voluntary.

Your Excellency,

This process poses a threat to the loss of our culture, customs, traditions, and way of life as it has been initiated in a manner that mirrors urban settlement models, capitalistic systems, and the loss of our traditional communal lifestyle, which has always emphasized collective resource use to improve our social welfare. Furthermore, this relocation is leading to the loss of sacred sites, ritual grounds, traditional slaughter camps, natural medicine areas, and cultural ceremonial sites such as the Enkipaata (initiation rituals), all of which are located in the Ngorongoro Crater basin that we are now forbidden to access.

Your Excellency,

This process has also led to family problems including the breakdown of marriages and the abandonment of children who are left without proper care or basic needs after being left behind by parents who have moved to Msomera.

Your Excellency,

The execution of this relocation has led to perceptions that we are environmental destroyers, we are aliens or new comers to this country, we collaborate with foreign countries to destroy Ngorongoro ecology and different other libel that strip us of our humanity and dignity. We believe that these actions are not part of the conservation problem that the process claimed to address. We respectfully ask you to intervene, denounce this initiative, and take necessary actions against those misleading the government and the community, as this has caused great unrest and harm to our people.

Your Excellency,

The Maasai community occupied both Serengeti and Ngorongoro for centuries and were removed from the Serengeti National Park in 1958 after over internal discussion within colonial machineries, it ended with a document signed certain traditional leadership on 21st April 1958. The colonial government guaranteed continued ownership and use of land according to traditional practices, and the colonial government provided assurances that there would be no further relocations, alongside the provision of social services for the community and their livestock. While we believe that process was forcible, it bears less human impact compared to ongoing relocation to Msomera.

Your Excellency,

We believe that any government should values its citizens more than the colonial system did, and we kindly ask you to end this enforced eviction that will lead to losing our land, both to colonial powers and then our own government.

Recommendation:

1. We request that you halt the relocation of the Ngorongoro residents and instead, let us engage in dialogue with the government to address the current challenges and ensure the sustainability of Ngorongoro.

C) Ngorongoro Pastoralists Council

Your Excellency,

The Pastoralists Council was established as key advisor to Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority on matters related to pastoralism in Ngorongoro. The pastoral Council was officially gazetted on 23rd June 2000, through Government Notice No. 234 of 2000. The council is a body that unites and represents the indigenous people residing within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Since its establishment, the Pastoralists Council has made significant contributions in advancing the livelihoods of the local communities, particularly in the areas of education, health, economy, livestock, and water, thus improving the lives of pastoralists.

The idea of establishing the Pastoralists Council recommended by the 1990 Cabinet Ministers' Commission Report (commonly referred to as the Kauzeni Commission), which recommended: “Effective and sustainable conservation will heavily depend on the full participation of local communities at all levels of the NCAA governance structure. Therefore, it is very important that the people of Ngorongoro are given the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding conservation matters, more so than is currently the case.”

Your Excellency, on 26th March 2020, the Government, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, directed that, pastoral council mandate be assumed by Ngorongoro District council and entity that is outside the framework of Ngorongoro.

Your Excellency, since the weakening of the Pastoralists Council, numerous negative consequences have arisen, including: the bureaucratic delays in providing support for students sponsored by the Council, non-payment of the Council's staff for over three years, discontinuation of sponsorship for 55 students approved by the Council and presented to the NCAA, the failure to convene statutory meetings of the Pastoralists Council, and the diminished participation of local communities in addressing challenges facing the conservation area.

recommendation:

- i) The Pastoralists Council should be reinstated and continue with its legal duties of serving the residents of the Ngorongoro District as it once did, and do not let the good intentions of your predecessors be lost before your eyes.

d) social service blockade and refusal of individual housing development

Your Excellency,

Since 2021, the leadership of the Arusha Region and the Ngorongoro District, in collaboration with the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority, suspended social services in health, education, water, road infrastructure, and livestock services under the pretext of voluntary relocation. It is important to note that within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, there are various projects that were in their early stages, nearing completion, and others initiated by the community but unable to progress due to:

- (i) The Authority's denial of permits for construction materials at entry points and the suspension or relocation of budgets meant for improving health, education, and water infrastructure to Msomera and other areas outside the Ngorongoro District.
- (ii) The suspension of emergency air ambulance services provided by the Flying Medical Service (FMS) of the Catholic Church's Arusha Diocese, leading to many emergency patients, including those with chronic diseases such as HIV and TB, mothers and children in need of vaccinations, being unable to receive timely care. For instance, in 2021 alone, Flying Medical Service reached 20,918 children, 5,271 pregnant women, and 5,604 patients. This organization does not need any government subsidies to operate and has been operating for many years serving lives of our fellow citizens

i. Recommendations:

- i. social services (Education, Health, Road Infrastructure, Livestock Services/Provision, and Water) should be reinstated without conditions.
- ii. All primary schools within the Ngorongoro District should be converted to boarding schools to allow easy access to education by children from areas far to school
- iii. Medical Flying Services (MFS) should be allowed to operate as its urgently needed not only by Maasai community but all people of walk of lives present within borders of United Republic of Tanzania particular from hard-to-reach areas. Medical Flying Service in 2021

alone enabled over 37,000 people, including pregnant women and children, to receive vaccines and medical care.

- iv. The Ngorongoro Conservation Authority in consultation with the community may develop appropriate building codes for the housing of residents and development projects.

e) Community non-involvement in Decision-Making Bodies of the Conservation Area

Madam President, according to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Act, Chapter 284 of the Laws of Tanzania (Section 5), the Board of Directors of the Authority and its Management are the key bodies responsible for overseeing all activities in the conservation area, including community development issues. However, unlike in the past, there is no community representative on the Board. Previously, the Chairperson of the Council and another member from the community were appointed by the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism to the Board of Directors of the Authority to represent interest of the community in the Board decision making process.

Your Excellency, equally at the management level of the Authority, there is no community representative. The lack of community representation in such vital bodies leads to the neglect of community development activities and limits community participation in the management of natural resources in the area.

Recommendations:

- i. Since the Ngorongoro Conservation Area is a multiple-use land area, including conservation, tourism, and community development, we recommend that the President appoint a Commissioner of Conservation capable of managing all three goals, not just focusing on conservation expertise, and this should include Board members from the community.
- ii. There should be at least five (5) community representatives on the Board of Directors and the Management of the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority to ensure balance of interest of the founding objective of Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Your Excellency Madam President, following our grievances, we make the following General requests:

1. We request for your public statement to stop all forms of harassment against the residents of the Ngorongoro. We seek to live in peace and tranquility within our area without being mistreated by conservation authorities and other state operatives.
2. We request permits for the construction of all community services, such as schools, health centers, road infrastructure, and water projects, to be granted to improve our living conditions.
3. We request the formation of an independent commission with various stakeholders to develop a proper land use plan.
4. We request greater community participation in all matters affecting the community.
5. We request the suspension of the relocation exercise, as it is fraught with deceit, propaganda against Maasai community, and significant bureaucratic hurdles.
6. We request the reinstatement of the Pastoralists Council to continue being a key mediator and link between the community and the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority. In line with this, we request the appointment of at least five community representatives on the Authority's Board.
7. We request the removal of any obstacles preventing indigenous people from returning home with their vehicles. Entry should be freely without paying to return to their homes.

Loliondo

Your Excellency, Madam President,

Since establishment of Pololeti Game Reserve in 2022, much has happened those affected lives and livelihood of the resident of Loliondo. Before establishment of Pololeti Game Reserve, paramilitary groups were deployed to forcefully evict people lawfully residing in the impacted area. Government has sized and confiscated tenth of thousands of livestock afterward that has ruined family economy and impacted livelihoods. Official used this process to weaponized citizenship of resident of Loliondo to justify exclusion

Recommendation

Loliondo Residents Request your excellency to

1. Revisit the government decision to annex 14 affecting 1502 square kilometers village land and establish Pololeti game without consulting the affected villagers and create Pololeti Game Reserve and Return back the grabbed land
2. While considering annulling your decision to establish Pololeti Game Reserve, we make an urgent request that you make directives to allow immediate grassing access for livestock. This will help to restore the affected Loliondo Residents livelihoods
3. Stop the pastoralists eviction and militarizing conservation across northern Tanzania
4. Form a participatory presidential Commission to investigate the eviction process and come up with legal recommendations on the land impacted by Pololeti game Reserve and other areas threatened by establishment of Game Reserve.
5. Direct for stoppage of police harassment in the name of illegal immigrants in Loliondo 6. Immediately stop a proposed plan to upgrade the Lake Natron villages land to a game reserve and other's pastoralist areas in the entire country

3.0 Conclusion

Your Excellency, Madam President,

we, the residents of Ngorongoro District, sincerely thank you for listening to our concerns. Since the resolution of our issue is within your capacity, we kindly ask that you address the challenges we have raised in order to achieve a lasting solution for the welfare of the community and conservation activities. This will ensure that we, residents of Ngorongoro, can enjoy our rights like any other Tanzanians.

On behalf of the community, I respectfully submit.