



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Lamu Port nears operationalization, as community marks third year since High Court ruling on project's violations, and calls for the ruling to be implemented**

Lamu 30th April 2021 – Residents of Lamu and particularly the fishermen in Lamu are marking the third year since the High Court judgment issued on 30th April 2018, which affirmed their grievances – including compensation of all the fishermen whose livelihoods had been disrupted because of the dredging of the sea at the Lamu Port area site -- but which has not been implemented.

Three years down the line, Lamu fishermen have yet to be compensated for the losses they have incurred from Lamu Port. Despite the High Court ruling, construction has continued unabated even as the community's traditional fishing rights and rights to protect their cultural identity have been violated – not forgetting the right to a clean and healthy environment. All have been ignored.

We take note of recent government and Kenya Port Authority statements that Lamu Port construction is reaching completion and that these first three berths will be launched and operationalised on 15 June 2021.

We call for the completion of a fair and just compensation process ahead of the launch of the Lamu Port in June, and for the prompt hearing and resolution of the appeal.

“We as the fishing community demand that fishermen be compensated before the official opening of the Lamu Port. We want inclusivity in every process for the compensation to reach the rightful people whose fishing activities have been greatly affected,” said Somo. M. Somo, head of Lamu County Beach Management Unit.

At a recent meeting with Lamu County Commissioner Irungu Macharia, the Beach Management Unit (BMU) and Save Lamu has seen that the process of ensuring the fishermen are compensated has begun.

As we mark this third anniversary of the ruling which granted this compensation, we call for the implementation of the court judgment over the compensation following this joint exercise carried out by the County Commissioner, Save Lamu, and BMU.

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“We are seeing there is a process that began this week to ensure the fishermen are compensated and we hope it will be fruitful. Three years is a very long time to wait and watch our families suffer because our livelihoods have been disrupted,” said Khadija Shekuwe, Coordinator of Save Lamu.

It is also our sincere hope that the Court of Appeal will sit soon and that the Appeal case is heard to its conclusive end. This is because compensation was not the only grievance. Other issues including failure to conduct adequate environmental management of the project, lack of proper environmental assessment, and the right to protect our cultural identity were not satisfactorily resolved. We would love to see this brought to its logical conclusion.