



MR. JIN LIQUN

President

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

Dear President Jin Liqun;

Greetings from NGO Forum on ADB.

We are writing to you on behalf of civil society groups and project-affected peoples in the time of this global pandemic to raise some key issues of concern. Unfortunately with struggling fiscal health, and lack of public health infrastructure Asian governments are opting to use the heavy-handed method of police and military crackdowns to enforce quarantine protocols, violating human rights and basic political freedoms. As this letter is being written civil society and journalists in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Philippines, Indonesia, Mongolia among many others are being persecuted, silenced, or incarcerated for speaking the truth and reporting state obligation failures surrounding COVID19 responses¹.

AIIB Project Affected Communities

Mr. President, you will be glad to know we have reached out to AIIB project-affected communities in the Philippines, India, Bangladesh, and raised small funds to provide food, masks, and basic medicines amid this crisis². It was sad to hear back from local people that the project developer had never reached out once to them with any material or financial support during this time. We are also saddened to notice that the AIIB itself during this time of crisis has completely neglected project-affected communities in their crisis response. Some AIIB staff independently contributed to our relief efforts and we applaud and recognize that people within the bank are there who want to do what is right and just. We hope you will take this into consideration as the threat continues and people are still at the mercy of this pandemic and the AIIB can do much more than just provide loans.

¹ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/03/how-authoritarians-are-exploiting-covid-19-crisis-grab-power>

² <https://www.forum-adb.org/covidfund>

AIB Annual Meeting, Civil Society Space and Management Response

We were assured by you, Mr. President at the AM in Jeju 2017 - that there will always be a management session with civil society in every annual meeting to discuss ground realities and policy ramifications. In a time of a global pandemic when communities are most vulnerable, and the wealth divide is contributing directly to the rise in covid19 infections across the world, the AIB has issued an annual meeting agenda with no mention of local communities and civil society engagement. After repeated inquiries to management we finally received word on a possible civil society engagement session, but nothing has been confirmed in terms of time or date. Mr. President please note that this was a reactive response from management and not a position taken as per your commitment to us previously.

The initial forthright communication linkages with management have slowed down in momentum drastically. Formal letters surrounding the Climate, Financial Intermediaries, Human Rights Defenders, inputs for Water, Transport, and sectoral strategies submitted from the civil society side had no meaningful responses if any. Even responses to public comments submitted during consultation on recent draft AIB strategies have not been published along with finalized strategies that bear no trace of incorporating concerns expressed by civil society.

We have heard from the board and management that the AIB Corporate Strategy will address our concerns around climate and green finance, unfortunately this document has not been open to civil society review or input and is heading straight towards a board approval in September. Simultaneously, with the ESF review underway, we are also noticing that emails to management are not being responded to, and the bank is retreating itself from the space of open dialogue with civil society.

To reiterate our key concerns in this letter we request you to take action on the following issues-

1. Ensure that management responds to all critical inputs from civil society on key issues, strategies, projects in a time bound manner as an institutional practice throughout the year.
2. AIB should ensure its safeguards operations team and project developers respond appropriately and urgently to project affected communities on the ground suffering from COVID19.
3. AIB must ensure that there is space and time for dialogue with CSOs and affected communities at all AGMs, including this virtual Annual Meeting 2020. This includes dialogue with management, project and strategy meetings, and meetings with senior management to discuss key policy revisions, in this year's case, the ESF review and corporate strategy.
4. Ensure that the Corporate Strategy draft is released for public comment and civil society review prior to board review in September
5. Ensure timebound information disclosure and meaningful consultation of all projects being considered amid this pandemic prior to board approval.

6. Ensure all COVID19 recovery loans de link from fossil fuel propagation and follow a Paris 1.5 aligned pathway.

We hope you will take appropriate action with your usual diligent leadership.

We will be looking forward to your proactive and open response in addressing our concerns at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Mr. Rayyan Hassan
Executive Director
NGO Forum on ADB

Cc:

Ms. Laurel Ostfield, Director General, Communications
Mr. D. Jagatheesa Pandian, Vice President and Chief Investment Officer
Mr. Joachim von Amsberg, Vice President, Policy and Strategy
Mr. Danny Alexander, Vice President and Corporate Secretary
Mr. Hamid Sharif, Complaints - Resolution, Evaluation and Integrity Unit (CEIU)
Board of Governors

Endorsed by the following organizations:

350.org Asia, Regional
350.org Japan, Japan
350.org Pilipinas, Philippines
Action Paysanne Contre La Faim, Democratic Republic of Congo
Aksi!, Indonesia
Arab Watch Coalition, Middle East and North Africa
Article 19, UK/Bangladesh
Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD), Regional

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication, Bangladesh
Bangladesh Working Group on External Debt (BWGED), Bangladesh
Bank Information Center, USA
Both ENDS, Netherlands
Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation (BIRUDO), Uganda
Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED), Philippines
Center for Environment and Participatory Research –CEPR, Bangladesh
Center for Environmental Justice, Sri Lanka
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), United States
Center of Bird Lovers, Armenia
Central Asia and Caucasus NGO Forum on ADB, Armenia
Centre for Financial Accountability, India
Centre for Human Rights and Development, Mongolia
Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network (CLEAN), Bangladesh
Collective for Economic Justice, India
Community Initiatives for Development in Pakistan-CIDP NGO, Pakistan
Conseil Regional Des Ong De Developpement, Democratic Republic of Congo
Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR), Peru
Digo Bikas Institute, Nepal
Environics Trust, India
Environmental Public Alliance, Armenia
Environmental Public Society, Armenia
Equitable Cambodia, Cambodia
Freedom from Debt Coalition, Philippines
Fundacja "Rozwój TAK - Odkrywki NIE", Poland
Gender Action, International
Global Environment Centre, Malaysia
Global Social Justice, Belgium
GrowthWatch, India
Hape Development and Welfare Association, Pakistan

Horn Afrik News Agency For Human Rights, Somalia
Human Rights Law Network (HRLN), India
International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, Tajikistan
Inclusive Development International, U.S.
Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF), India
Initiative for Rights View, Bangladesh
International Accountability Project (IAP), International
International Association of People's Lawyers, Australia
Lumiere Synergie pour le Developpement, Senegal
Magar Lawyer's forum-Nepal, Nepal
Mangrove Action Project, USA
Mekong Watch, Japan
MiningWatch Canada, Canada
Nash Vek Public Foundation, Kyrgyzstan
Network Movement for Justice and Development, Sierra Leone
NGO "Youth Group on Protection of Environment", Tajikistan
NGO Forum on Cambodia, Cambodia
OXFAM
Oyu Tolgoi Watch, Mongolia
Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, Pakistan
Participatory Research Action Network- PRAN, Bangladesh
Peoples Development Institute, Philippines
Progressive Plantation Workers Union, India
Programme on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PWESCR) International
Recourse, Europe
Rivers without Boundaries Coalition, Mongolia
Rivers without Boundaries Coalition, Russia
Rural Reconstruction Nepal, Nepal
Safety and Rights Society, Bangladesh
Songshoptaque, Bangladesh

SPELL-Sustainability and Participation through Education and Lifelong Learning, Philippines

Urgewald e.V., Germany

Voices for Interactive Choice & Empowerment, Bangladesh

Witness Radio – Uganda, Uganda

WomanHealth Philippines, Philippines

Youth For Environment Education And Development Foundation (YFEED Foundation), Nepal